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**Philip Neal** directed the excavation at Thurnscoe and was a project officer with Northern Archaeological Associates from 1998 until July 2003 when he 'retired' to follow an alternative career in shiatsu.

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*The Society wishes it to be understood that the responsibility for opinions and material contained in articles, notes and reviews is that of the authors, to whom any resulting correspondence should be addressed.*

## EDITORIAL

Observant readers of the title page to this volume will have noted a change in editorship which has prompted this departure from custom, in the form of a brief editorial from your new editors; but we should first like to pay tribute to Mr and Mrs Collinson, the former editors, for their past labours and for laying much of the ground work for the current volume. Editorial labours are now divided between Jill Wilson (Archaeology) and Edward Royle (History).

Our policy is to maintain the high standards set for the *YAJ* as the leading periodical publication for archaeology and history in the county. This is a fully refereed journal and all articles are sent, anonymously, to experts in the field before being accepted for publication. We hope this will encourage practising academics — needing to satisfy external scrutineers of the quality of their research — to submit their work to us. We shall continue to publish reports of the most recent archaeological excavations and finds in the county and to welcome papers from both established and young professionals researching the archaeology and history of Yorkshire in any period. In addition we shall keep our pages open to the serious amateur who is able to contribute the results of his or her research into the past. It is our policy to welcome those new to publishing and we shall do our best, through our referees and as editors, to assist those who are less experienced at writing up their research. We are open to proposals for papers as well as polished typescripts and will try to give constructive advice to would-be contributors; but a typescript should not be prepared without the author first consulting the Notes to Contributors which are available from the editors.

A great deal of research is undertaken, mainly in institutions of higher education, which never sees the light of day. Buried in theses, this research is accessible only with difficulty and — especially with MA theses — there is often no central finding list of what has been done. We think this is a pity and so we shall not only be interested in considering articles arising out of such work but we intend in future to publish a list of recently completed theses on Yorkshire topics brought to our attention by the various universities and colleges of higher education in the historical county. Another innovation is that we are now providing at the head of each article a summary of its contents which will, in time, also appear on the Yorkshire Archaeological Society's web site. Suggestions from our readers for other changes will always be considered carefully. We hope you enjoy this latest volume of your journal and look forward to working with and for you over the next few years.

*Edward Royle*  
*Jill Wilson*



## A COPPER ALLOY SPEARHEAD AND CHISEL FROM ALLERSTON, NORTH YORKSHIRE

By Oliver Jessop

*This paper documents the discovery of two Late Bronze Age copper alloy artefacts from Allerston in the Vale of Pickering. The artefacts appear to be part of a small dispersed hoard and were recovered by a metal detector. During the process of their identification, the opportunity was taken to examine their metallurgy. Their composition is summarised and examined in relation to recent research into similar artefacts from the region.*

### CIRCUMSTANCES OF DISCOVERY

The two copper (Cu) alloy artefacts discussed here were discovered by Mr S. Bowman<sup>1</sup> in November 1996 whilst metal detecting on an outing arranged by the 'Cleveland Discovers'.<sup>2</sup> During the event no similar metal artefacts were recovered by other members of the group. The two artefacts were found in close proximity to one another and for this reason it is suggested that they represent part of a small dispersed hoard.

### SITING OF THE FIND

The find spot was within a ploughed field at the south end of the village of Allerston, North Yorkshire (Fig. 1). The field is west of South Farm and south of Malton Lane, centred on NGR SE875817. The field is approximately 20 m a.s.l. and close to the valley bottom. The exposed plough surface consisted of a light brown sandy clay matrix and was unseeded.

The artefacts were found approximately 25 m apart, the spearhead at NGR SE87708165 and the chisel at NGR SE87688175.<sup>3</sup> The spearhead was a surface find, whilst the chisel was recovered from a depth of c.10 cm, excavated using a hand trowel.

### DESCRIPTION OF THE SPEARHEAD

This artefact (Fig. 2) consists of the blade and tip from a copper alloy spearhead. The surface has a dark green patina and the blade is heavily pitted. The tip is rounded and blunt and there are a number of deep nicks towards the edge of the blade. The point of the blade forms part of mid rib with prominent channels on either side, a form commonly described as a 'solid channelled' or 'furrowed blade' type. The artefact is 4.7 cm long, 2.8 cm wide, and the central rib is 1.1 cm thick. Its weight after cleaning was 41 grams.

The socket and lower part of the blade are missing. At the base of the spine is a diagonal cut, which indicates that it has been struck with a sharp object or pincers when in a heated and malleable state. It is estimated that up to 40% of the spearhead has been lost and the original form is unclear. However a comparison with complete examples of

<sup>1</sup> Mr S. Bowman gave permission to examine and sample the artefacts.

<sup>2</sup> The Cleveland Discovers are a metal detecting club based in Redcar, Cleveland.

<sup>3</sup> Locations of findspots were indicated on a map by Mr S. Brown but their exact positions were not surveyed at the time of discovery.

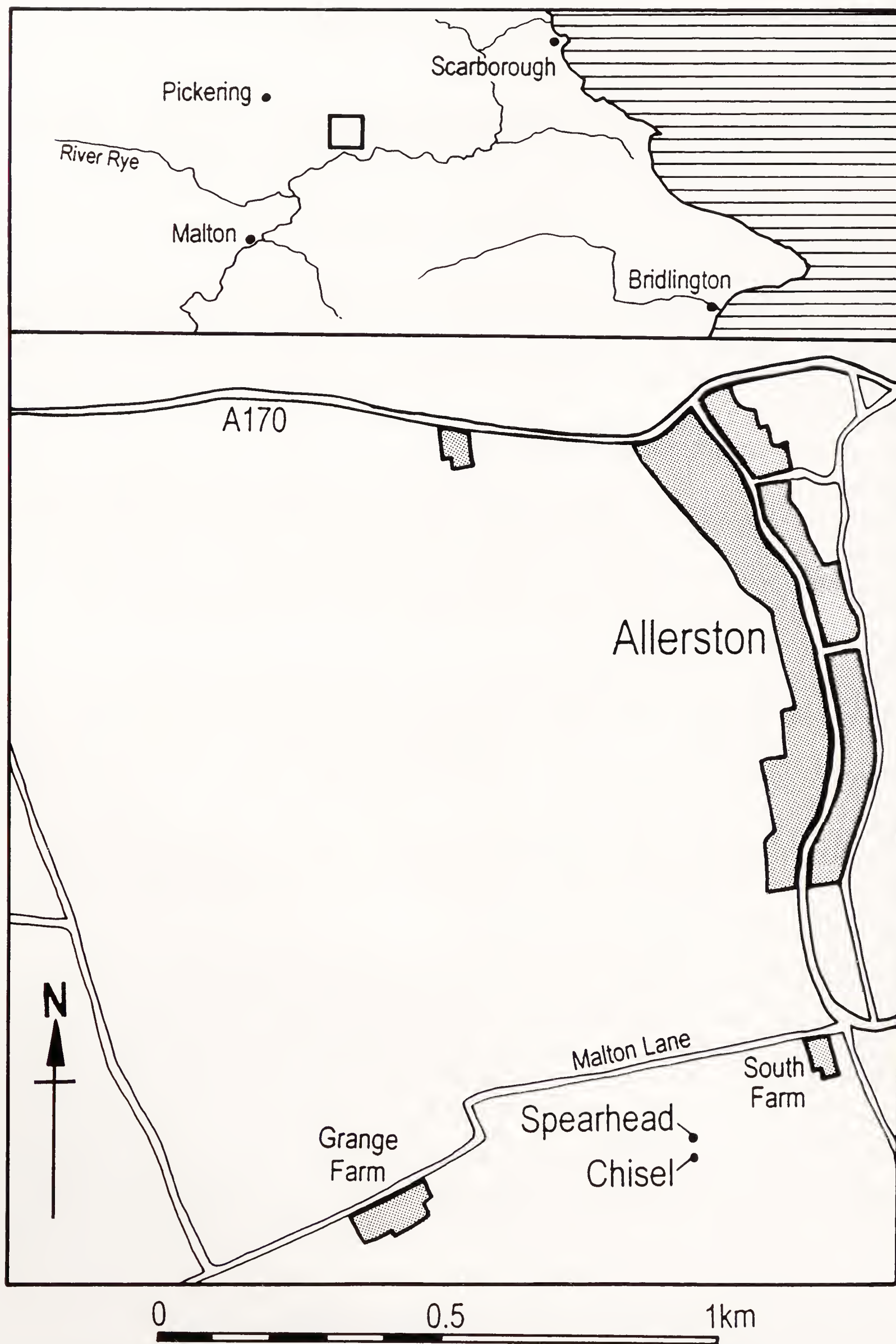


Fig. 1. Location map showing findspots of the copper alloy artefacts.



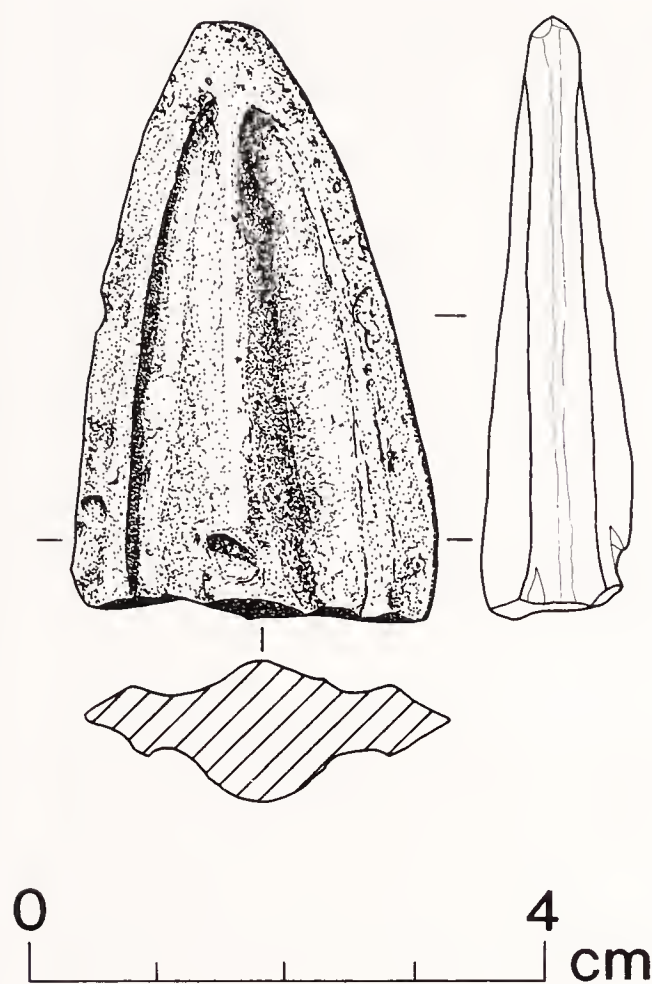


Fig. 2. The spearhead.

Late Bronze Age (LBA) spearheads, suggests that it was probably a basal looped form, rather than the single looped variety which has a larger socket, flatter blades and flanges.

### DESCRIPTION OF CHISEL

The chisel (Fig. 3) has a slightly corroded surface with a dark green/brown patina. Prior to cleaning there were traces of light brown clayey soil adhering to parts of the surface. The artefact is a slender chisel of sub-rectangular section. The cross section is approximately square, although the upper edges are faceted forming an almost circular cross section at the shaft end measuring 1.1 cm across.

The shaft or blade tapers to a flat point on its upper surface giving the impression of being bent or curved. The length of the blade is 4.5 cm and 1 cm wide. It is 31 grams in weight. The tip is worn and uneven indicating that it was damaged in antiquity prior to deposition in the ground. One side of the tip has a jagged surface, whilst the other side is angled. These features indicate that the blade originally had a bevelled end.

On the upper surface of the blade is a 'U-shaped' indentation. This feature is curious and whether it was intentional, or created after its useful working life, is unclear. The upper part of the chisel is missing, although similar examples from LBA hoards have either a narrow socket or short tang. The handle would have been made from an organic material, either wood, bone or antler.

### METALLOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

Mr P. Clogg of the University of Durham<sup>4</sup> examined the metallurgical composition of both artefacts during February and March 1997.

The effect of surface corrosion on the two artefacts resulted in a two staged sampling procedure. This was deemed necessary, because during the solidification of a cast Cu alloy object the tin rich metal is forced out to the surface, a phenomenon called 'tin

<sup>4</sup> Mr P. Clogg is part of the Conservation Team in the Department of Archaeology at the University of Durham who specialises in the metallurgical analysis of archaeological materials.

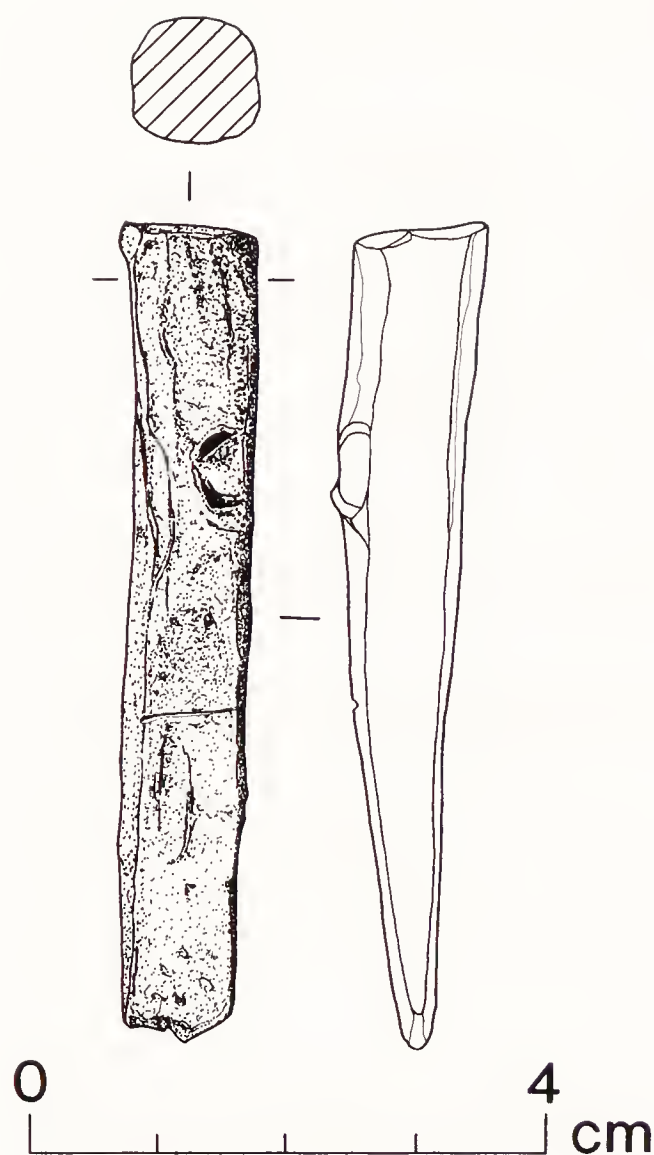


Fig. 3. The chisel.

sweating'.<sup>5</sup> When this happens, any surface corrosion can mask the true composition, therefore it is essential that any samples required for metallurgical analysis are taken from the core metal. Unfortunately, due to time and financial constraints the analysis was focused on the spearhead which was sampled four times, whilst the chisel was only sampled once.

The first part of the analysis involved the removal of any remaining soil from the surface of the artefacts with a glass bristle brush and then the surface of the metal was analysed using EDXRF analysis.<sup>6</sup> The edge of the blade and the broken section across the central rib of the spearhead were sampled, along with the blade of the chisel. The second part of the analysis of the spearhead involved the removal of a thin section of metal from the base of the blade where the socket had become detached. This fragment of metal was set in resin and polished to remove the surface corrosion. The second set of samples were taken from the thin section at the same locations as described above.

## RESULTS

The results of the EDXRF analysis are outlined in Table 1. For ease of comparison the samples are grouped together in pairs. Samples A and C are the external patinated surface, whilst samples B and D represent the core metal after it had been thin-sectioned and polished.

The results demonstrate that the two artefacts have differing metallographic compositions. The spearhead is a tin bronze alloy, with very small amounts of lead (Pb) and

<sup>5</sup> A. Bailey, *A Text Book of Metallurgy* (London 1964).

<sup>6</sup> This technique irradiates a sample with x-rays causing secondary and fluorescent x-rays to be emitted. The wavelengths of these secondary emissions are measured and compared with an accepted scientific standard to determine the concentrations of all elements present within the sample.



TABLE 1: Results of EDXRF analysis of the two copper alloy artefacts

	% Cu	% As	% Pb	% Sn	Description
<b>Spearhead</b>					
Sample A	46.8	0.1	0.2	52.4	External corrosion (edge)
Sample B	45.7	0	0.5	52.7	Polished thin section (edge)
Sample C	56.2	0.2	0.4	42.9	External corrosion (core)
Sample D	51.6	0.2	0.4	47.0	Polished thin section (core)
<b>Chisel</b>					
Sample E	98.7	0.3	0.6	467ppm	External corrosion (blade)

arsenic (As). The deliberate addition of impurities such as arsenic have a hardening effect on copper and improve its casting ability, whereas tin lowers the melting point of bronze and improves its hardness. Unfortunately, any evidence of tin sweating was masked by the surface corrosion.

In contrast, the chisel is almost pure copper, with only low levels of lead and arsenic presumably to facilitate working, although they could be naturally occurring compounds. A composition such as this, is discussed by Tylecote<sup>7</sup> as being one of the crucial characteristics of LBA alloys, where the amount of lead and arsenic added during casting aids their identification. The addition of up to 1% lead facilitates working, however if this is increased to above 2% the mechanical properties of the alloy are significantly reduced.

CHRONOLOGY

The form of the spearhead recovered from Allerston is interpreted as a basal looped type, and is similar to the single looped variety in that they both have a wide distribution throughout the north of England.<sup>8</sup> In Yorkshire alone, Radley<sup>9</sup> has catalogued a total of twelve find spots ranging from Northallerton in the north, Bainbridge and Clapham to the northwest, Follifoot, Bradford, Morley and Shelf in the central area, Hatfield to the south and Folkton, Harpham, Brigham and Leconfield to the east. The distribution covers the whole extent of the Yorkshire region, with the Allerston finds located in the northeast area of the group. Stylistic comparison with parallels from the region enable a tentative date range of between 1200–1000 BC to be suggested.<sup>10</sup>

Artefacts dated to this period from the north of England are ascribed to the Wallington metalwork tradition.<sup>11</sup> This has been subdivided into various phases and items recovered from the Vale of Pickering dated to the middle period are classified as from the Hotham Carr Phase *c.* 1200–1000 BC.

Discoveries of LBA tools are much less common than weapons. The closest find spot to Allerston is between Rotherham and Doncaster at Kilnhurst in South Yorkshire.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>7</sup> R. F. Tylecote, *The Prehistory of Metallurgy in the British Isles*, (London 1990).  
<sup>8</sup> T. G. Manby, 'Bronze Age Settlement in Eastern Yorkshire', in *Settlement and Society in the British Later Bronze Age*, ed. J. Barrett and R. Bradley, British Archaeol. Report, 83 (1980), pp. 307–70.  
<sup>9</sup> J. Radley, 'New Spearheads from Yorkshire and a Provisional List of Yorkshire Spear-Heads', *YAJ*, 42 (1967–70), pp. 15–19.  
<sup>10</sup> Burgess, *Bronze Age Metalwork in Northern England*, a corroded blade, fragment No. 11.  
<sup>11</sup> C. Burgess, 'A Bronze Age Rapier from Catterick Bridge', *YAJ*, 67 (1995) pp. 1–6.  
<sup>12</sup> After C. Burgess, *Bronze Age Metalwork in Northern England, c. 1000 to 700 BC* (Newcastle-Upon-Tyne 1968), p. 3.



This hoard contained three chisels or hammers and Burgess noted that the concentration of three similar artefacts is rare and interpreted them as a potential 'craftsman's tool kit'.

## CONCLUSION

This typological and metallurgical analysis has enabled the two artefacts to be dated to the middle period of the Wallington metalwork tradition, the Hotham Carr Phase *c.* 1200–1000 BC.<sup>13</sup> The interpretation that they are part of a dispersed hoard is somewhat subjective and although no other items were recovered at the time of discovery, it should not necessarily be regarded as a complete assemblage.<sup>14</sup>

The most compelling evidence for the hoard interpretation are signs of damage. On the spearhead there is a diagonal cut at the base of the spine (Fig. 2), a feature that would only have been created during heating of the metal. A similar feature on the chisel is unlikely to be pure coincidence and suggests that both artefacts were deliberately cut up for reuse. The fragmentary nature of many finds can be interpreted as a direct result of depositional activity, rather than as a result of natural processes during burial.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Mr S. Bowman for bringing the artefacts to my attention, Professor A. Harding for his encouraging comments and Dr D. Dungworth for information concerning his analysis of Copper Alloy objects from the North of England. I am especially grateful to Mr P. Clogg of the University of Durham who undertook the EDXRF analysis and to Dr D. Hadley and Dr H. Willmott for commenting on the text.

<sup>13</sup> S. Needham, 'An Independent Chronology for British Bronze Age Metalwork: The Results of the Oxford Radiocarbon Accelerator Programme', *Archaeol. J.*, 154 (1997), pp. 55–107.

<sup>14</sup> S. Needham, 'The Penard-Wilburton succession: new finds from Croxton (Norfolk) and Thirsk (Yorks.)', *Antiq. J.*, 70 (1990), pp. 253–70.

## A ROMANO-BRITISH ENCLOSED FARMSTEAD AT BILLINGLEY DRIVE, THURNSCOE, SOUTH YORKSHIRE

*By Philip G. E. Neal and Richard Fraser with contributions by Richard  
Brickstock, Cathy Batt, Jane Cowgill, Peter Didsbury, Louisa Gidney, Peter  
Makey, James Rackham and Elizabeth Wright*

*A Romano-British farmstead covering 0.4ha was excavated on farmland near Thurnscoe, South Yorkshire, in advance of residential development. The site consisted of a sequence of ditched rectilinear enclosures linked to trackway and field system elements. A large T-shaped corn drying oven had been constructed outside the main enclosures. Possible burials were dispersed around the periphery of the enclosures, but in the final phase a small formalised cemetery appeared to have been established within one of them. Occupation of the site probably commenced in the mid-second century and ended by the mid-fourth century AD. Evidence was recovered which demonstrated that as well as coal, the inhabitants exploited both heathland and coppiced timber for fuel. There was some evidence for iron-smithing and a high quality snaffle bit was recovered from an enclosure ditch terminal where it had probably been placed as a structured deposit.*

### INTRODUCTION

A programme of excavation, covering approximately 0.42 ha, was carried out on a Romano-British farmstead on land adjacent to Billingley Drive, Thurnscoe, South Yorkshire, centred on grid reference SE 452052 (Fig. 1). The excavation was carried out between September and November 1999 on the recommendation of the South Yorkshire Archaeology Service in advance of a housing development. The site lay on the western end of a low ridge on the south side of Thurnscoe village, some six miles to the west of Doncaster. Sandstone bedrock lay very close to the surface in this area and as a result the soils were locally well-drained (Jarvis *et al.* 1984).

The presence of possible archaeological remains on the site was first identified from cropmarks discovered by D. Riley (1978, 21). The cropmarks suggested the presence of two conjoined enclosures together with a series of ditches, including a trackway, within the development area (Fig. 2). The form and location of the site was subsequently confirmed by geophysical survey (Fig. 3) and a programme of trial trenching, which suggested that the site was Roman in date (Neal 1999).

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Cropmark and earthwork evidence of settlement enclosures, field systems and trackways on the Magnesian Limestone and Upper Coal Measures indicate that the landscape in the Doncaster area was being extensively settled and farmed by the Late Iron Age/Roman period. On the Coal Measures the cropmarks are generally of small rectilinear or sub-



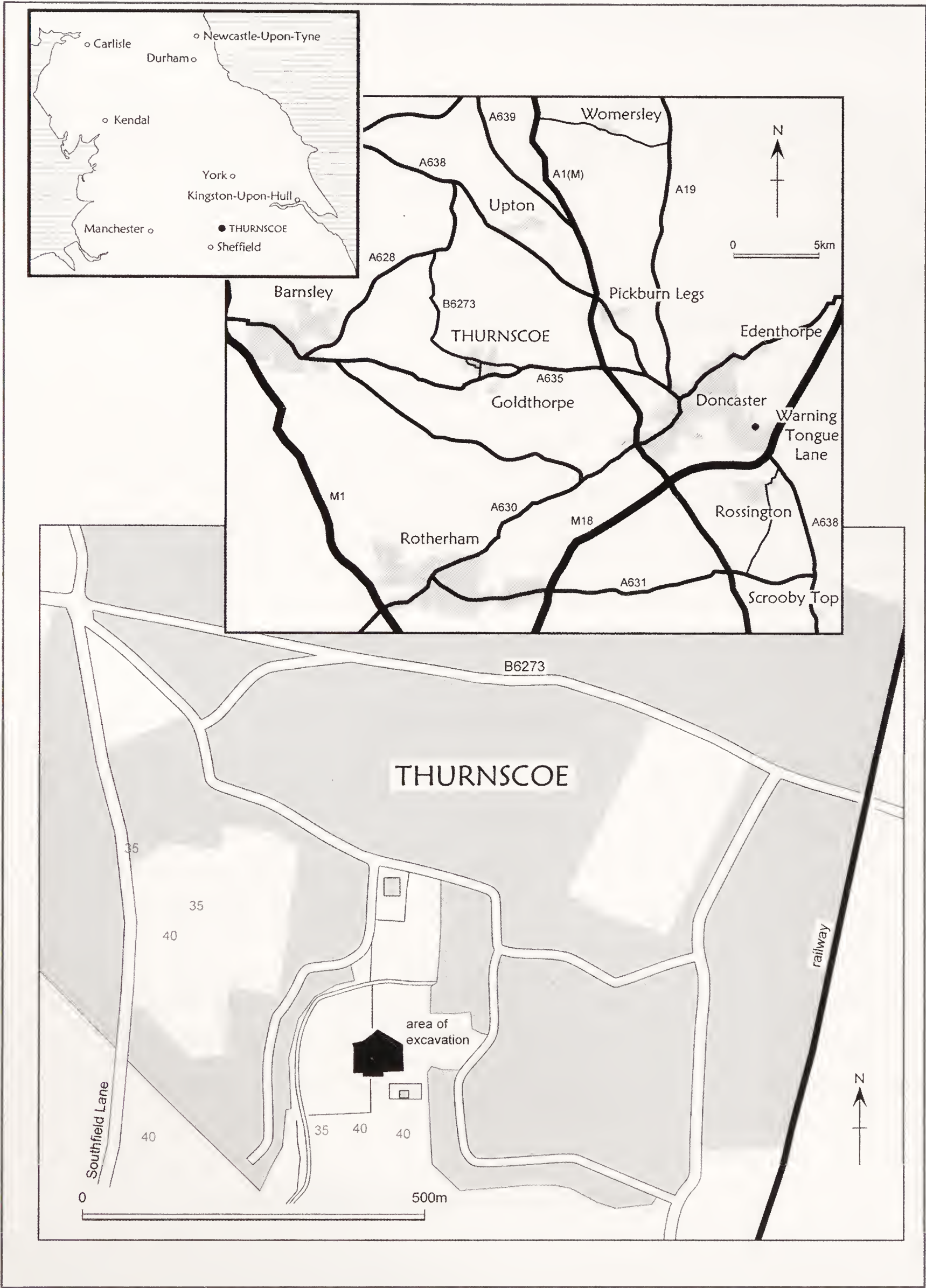


Fig. 1. Site location.





Fig. 2. Aerial view of cropmark enclosures at Billingley Drive, Thurnscoe. © Crown Copyright. NMR Riley Collection.

rectangular enclosures with traces of the remains of large rectangular field systems and associated trackways (Riley 1977, 24). The distribution of these sites is limited partly by the extent of urban and industrial development, and also because the cropmarks appear to occur largely on soils over carboniferous sandstones rather than on the shales or mudstones.

Eleven cropmark sites in the form of small sub-rectangular and D-shaped enclosures are recorded within four kilometres of Thurnscoe. Most of these are thought to be Romano-British or Iron Age in date (Riley 1978); the presence of later Roman material on some sites implies this level of settlement and agriculture continued at least until the late fourth century AD. In addition, the Roman Road, *Riknild Street*, is recorded as having passed through the western edge of the Thurnscoe (Codrington 1903). The excavated cropmark sites imply little difference between Iron Age and Romano-British rural settlements comprising enclosed settlements within an organised landscape of ditched fields and droveways. The excavated evidence indicates that this was predominantly a mixed farming economy in a predominantly open landscape with small surviving areas of wild or coppiced woodland and heath (Buckland 1986).

### GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY

A geophysical survey (Shiel 1999) was undertaken at the site as part of a first stage of evaluation. This survey identified the two enclosures which had been recorded as cropmarks (Figs 2 and 3). Further segments of ditches, a possible 'droveway' extending northwards and a number of pit-type features were also identified. The survey identified no





Fig. 3. Geophysical survey results (after GSB).

evidence for round houses either within or outwith the enclosures, although such features are not always susceptible to identification by geophysical survey, particularly if they are post-built structures. In this instance there was both a high level of background noise and strong magnetic disturbance from a cast iron water pipe which had a masking effect across the central part of the site.

## EXCAVATION METHODOLOGY

Archaeological trial trenching targeting the results of the geophysical survey confirmed the presence of the enclosure ditches with evidence for structural features within dating to the Roman period. The presence of a ditched driveway leading north from the settlement was also confirmed. Open area excavation focused on the area of the enclosed settlement. The area of investigation undertaken covered a total area of 0.42 ha. The excavation was undertaken over a period of ten weeks between September and November 1999. The full extent of the enclosure settlement was stripped using a 360° excavator with a toothless ditching bucket and then cleaned by hand. The majority of the features were found to be cut directly into the underlying sandstone bedrock, but additional machine cleaning was undertaken in two areas where a deposit of sandy silt obscured the archaeological features. Up to 0.3 m of sandy silt was removed from within a large depression in the eastern half of the site and a layer 0.15 m thick of silty sand was removed from the central southern part of the site.

The archaeological features had been truncated by ridge and furrow and there was no surviving evidence of floor surfaces or occupation horizons. Two large cast iron water pipes associated with twentieth-century coal mining bisected the site. The pipe trenches had caused some localised damage to the archaeology.

A detailed excavation strategy was agreed with South Yorkshire Archaeology Service such that a minimum 50% sample was excavated of all discrete features whilst 25% of enclosure ditches and 10% of other linear features were excavated (Fraser 1999). Based upon the results of the trial trenching it was apparent that environmental evidence was poorly preserved except in the deeper features, or where there was evidence of burning and carbonisation of remains. Therefore the majority of bulk palaeoenvironmental samples were taken from features which fitted these criteria and, in addition, a proportion of all feature types across the site were sampled to form a representational sample of the site as a whole. All processed samples were checked for the presence of hummerscale. Where identified during excavation potential samples were taken for radiocarbon dating. Archaeomagnetic dating samples of burnt *in-situ* deposits were taken on site by Cathy Batt of the Department of Archaeological Science, University of Bradford.

A watching brief was subsequently undertaken over the remainder of the field affected by the development during 2000/01. The watching brief confirmed the continuation of the driveway ditches and boundary features as identified by the geophysical survey, but did not identify any other features outside the main area of excavation.

## EXCAVATION RESULTS

The excavations at Thurnscoe have identified a sequence of ditched enclosures with evidence for settlement and agricultural activity within (Fig. 4). Four phases of enclosure dating to the Romano-British period were identified based on stratigraphic relationships recorded during excavation (Fig. 5). These were truncated by a fifth phase of activity which consisted of medieval and post-medieval agricultural activity comprising the ploughed down remains of ridge and furrow which overlay the whole of the excavated



area. The furrows were orientated north to south, spaced approximately 10 m apart. Pottery dating from the eleventh to the eighteenth century was recovered from within the plough furrows.

### PHASE I (Fig. 6)

The earliest phase of activity comprised two small sub-rectangular enclosures to the north of which was a triangular area defined by ditches on three sides. The enclosures were defined by small shallow gullies and may have shared a single eastern boundary ditch (1921). This eastern ditch had largely been cut away by a later enclosure ditch and only fragmentary evidence for it survived. The northern ditch of Enclosure A and the southern ditch of Enclosure B were immediately adjacent to each other with roughly aligned eastern terminals suggesting the ditches were contemporary and would have defined an internal entrance *c.* 4 m wide between the two enclosures. Only 12 sherds of pottery was recovered from features associated with Phase I, five of which were from the ditches of Enclosure B. The pottery included four sherds of Roman greyware and a sherd of Romano-British Shell-tempered Ware, generally dated to the second and early third century AD.

#### *Southern Enclosure (A)*

The Southern Enclosure (A) measured approximately 22 m by 16 m, defined by a U-sectioned ditch (1417) 0.7 m wide and 0.4 m deep on the north and west sides (Fig. 7). A possible squared post-setting 0.4 m deep was identified cut into the fill of the southern terminal of the western ditch. The southern side of the enclosure was defined by a fragmentary shallow ditch (1865/1211) which only survived to a maximum depth of 0.19 m. The eastern ditch had been entirely truncated by the later Phase II enclosure, however, at its southern limit the Phase I enclosure ditch (1759) was traced turning towards the west for a distance of 3.75 m where it clearly terminated (Fig. 8). There was a small stakehole right at its terminal which may have been a layout marker used during construction. The ditch was U-sectioned, 0.9 m wide and 0.22 m deep, and cut a line of three postholes (1761, 1789 and 1791) which were evenly spaced along its outer edge. All three postholes measured approximately 0.3–0.4 m in diameter and 0.3 m deep with visible postpipes *c.* 0.14 m in diameter defined by in-situ post-packing. The postholes may represent a fenced enclosure that was replaced by a ditch as the settlement developed.

Beyond the terminal of ditch 1759 was a discrete sequence of intercutting features (1772, 1774 and 1776) of which posthole 1774 continued the line of postholes (1761, 1789, 1791) truncated by enclosure ditch 1759 (Fig. 8). Slot 1776, which may have been a flue to a small oven, was a sub-rectangular feature 0.7 m by 0.4 m and 0.34 m deep that contained two fills, the primary fill (1778) comprised mainly of charcoal and contained a significant quantity of cereal chaff. The relationship between posthole 1774 and slot 1776 had largely been truncated by later shallow pit 1772, but slot 1776 appeared to be later.

Bounded by the ditches of Enclosure A were a number of structural features which included over thirty postholes, slots and groups of stakeholes (Fig. 9). Only a greyware body sherd and a sherd of a hard white flagon fabric, possibly of second-century date, were recovered from excavation of all of the structural features within the enclosure, hence it has not been possible to phase these features on artefactual evidence. However, the Phase I Enclosure A ditch 1417 clearly marks the western limit of these features and it has been assumed the majority are contemporary. Many of the postholes and stakeholes appeared to form lines, as opposed to arcs, and may therefore represent fence lines or agricultural structures. One particular pattern within the postholes may represent the



Fig. 4. Feature plan (all phases).



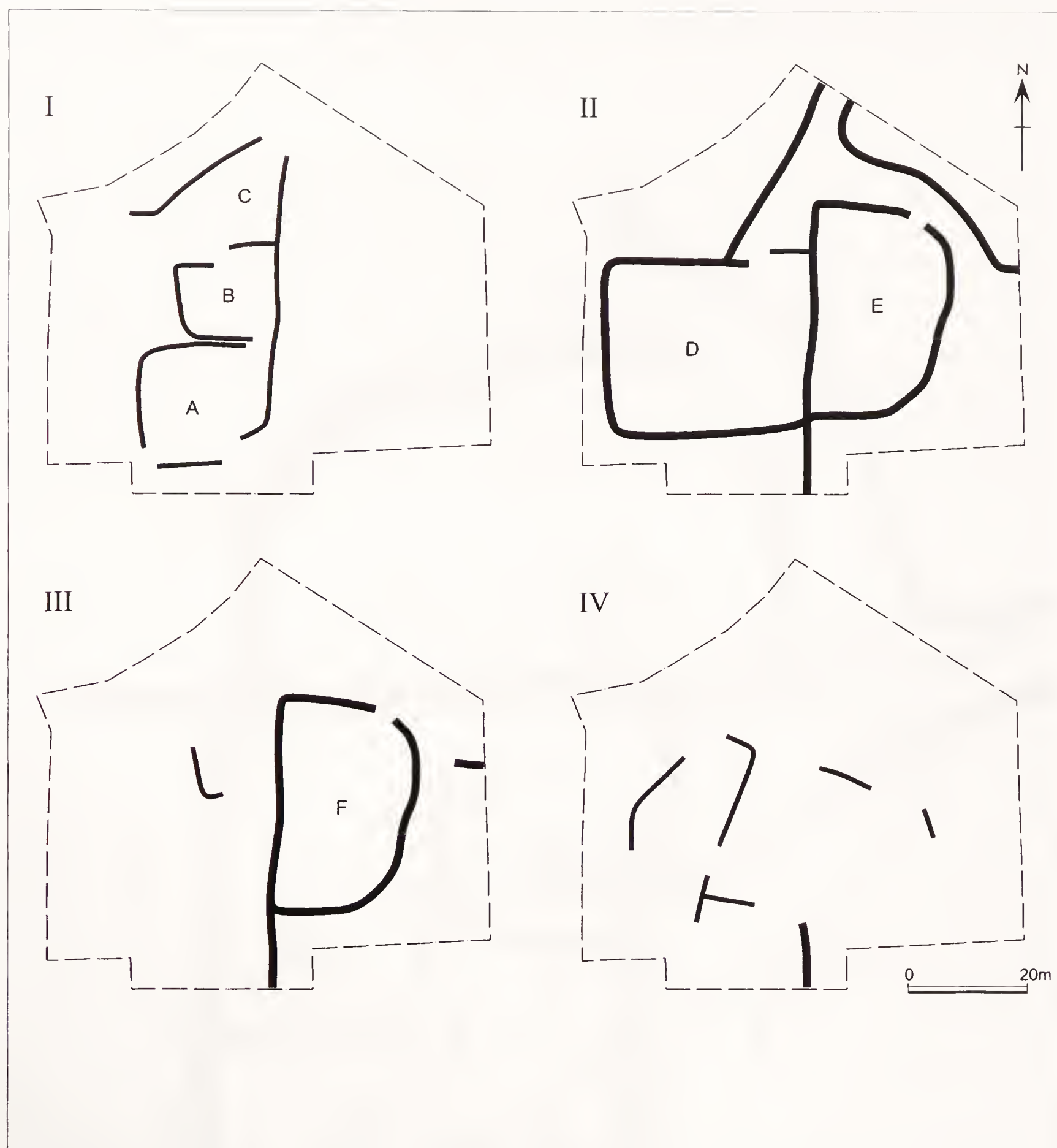


Fig. 5. Phase plans.

north and west sides of an earlier fenced enclosure (postholes 1385, 1384, 1594, 1611, 1615, 1360, 1324, 1320 and 1308; from south-west to north east) (Fig. 7). These postholes may have been contemporaneous with postholes 1761, 1789 and 1791 which were cut by ditch segment 1759 of Enclosure A (see above). The postholes generally measured between 0.2 m and 0.4 m across and 0.35 m deep with occasional larger post-holes surviving. Two distinct orientations were visible within the distribution of stakeholes which were broadly parallel or perpendicular to enclosure ditch 1417. The stakeholes averaged 40 mm to 60 mm in diameter and 50 mm to 60 mm in depth.



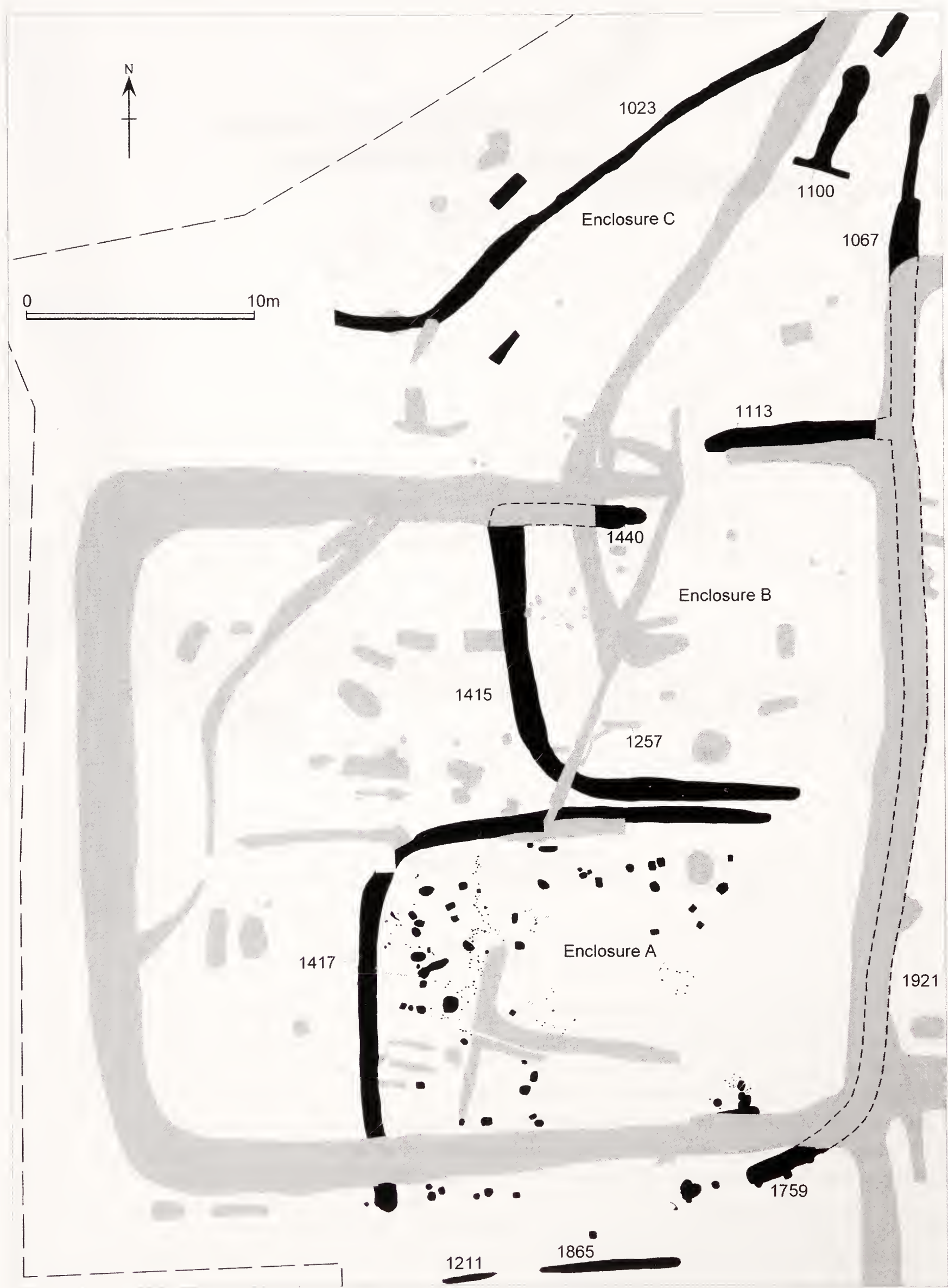


Fig. 6. Phase I feature plan.



Fig. 7. Features within Enclosure A.

A soil sample of one posthole (1316) to the west of pit 1658 (Fig. 7) produced several hundred flakes and spheroids of hammerscale. The highest frequency of hammerscale in any other sample from the site was seven. This quantity of hammerscale clearly indicates the proximity of iron smithing, although whether it can be associated with Phase I is problematic. No obvious layout of a structure can be identified which might relate to smithing within this area. The large pit (1658) was mirrored 3.75 m to the north within Enclosure B by pit 1099, both pits were *c.* 1.5 m across, steep-sided, about 0.3 m deep with a flat base. However, there were no artefacts nor environmental data recovered from either pit, and hence they cannot be firmly associated within Phase I, and may relate to Phase II when both similar pits would have been located within the same enclosure.

Stratigraphically only slot 1665, located towards the south-east corner of Enclosure A, could be shown to pre-date the Phase II enclosure (D). The slot was traced for a length



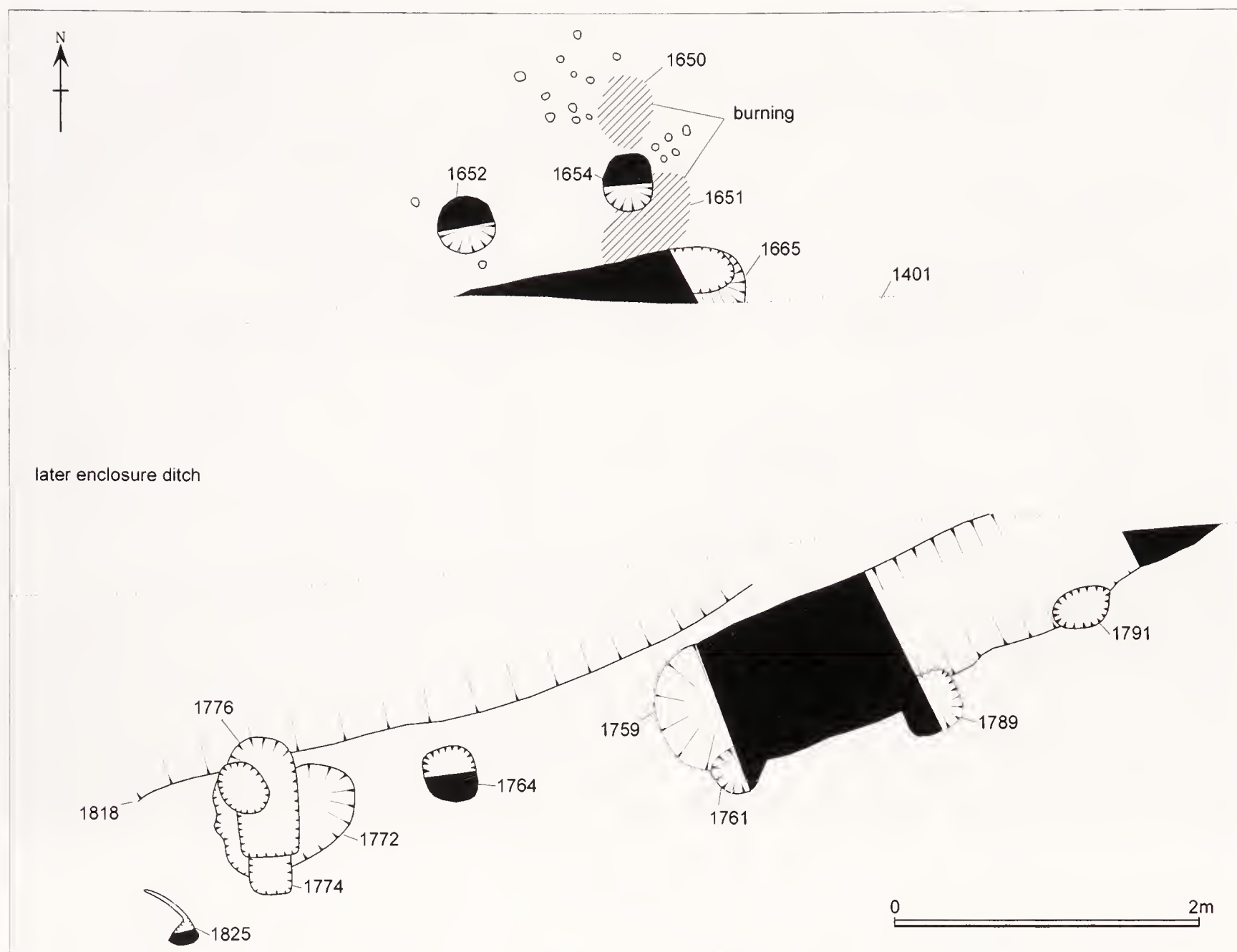


Fig. 8. Detail of Phase I features.

of 1.3 m at which point it was truncated by Enclosure D ditch (Fig. 8). The slot was vertical sided, flat bottomed (0.33 m wide by 0.3 m deep) and contained a significant quantity of charcoal. The charcoal was composed entirely of narrow stems of heather type material (*Ericaceae*) (Gale, see below). Adjacent to the slot were two sub-circular postholes (1652 and 1654; both measured *c.* 0.32 m in diameter and 0.14 m deep) and two clearly defined patches where the surface of the bedrock was significantly burnt (1650 and 1651) (Fig. 8). A number of stakeholes were recorded next to the burnt patches. The stakeholes formed two clusters either side of the area of burning 1651. The angle of both respective groups of stakeholes was inclined towards the area of burning, and they could have formed a tripod related to pot stands or some other small structure around the two probable small hearth positions. The areas of burning are likely to have been close to the original ground surface; this supposition is supported by the fact that the ground surface within this area of the enclosure had been partly lowered by cut 1818, which created a step or shelf in the natural bedrock. Cut 1818 was parallel, and immediately within, Enclosure A ditch 1759 (Fig. 8).

Just outside the north-west corner of Enclosure A was another slot-like feature (1200), the profile and deposits within this feature were almost identical to slot 1665. The slot was 2.38 m long, 0.26 m wide and 0.31 m deep with vertical sides and a sharp break to a flat base. The slot increased gradually in depth towards its eastern end. The primary fill was charcoal which again appeared to be entirely composed of narrow stems from





Fig. 9. Structural features within the north-west corner of Enclosure A, with ditch 1417 in foreground (facing east).

the heather family (*Ericacea*). The similarity of features 1665 and 1200 would suggest they had the same function during occupation of the site, but not necessarily in the same phase.

#### *Central Enclosure (B)*

The Central Enclosure (B) measured approximately 13 m by 12 m, defined by a U-sectioned ditch (0.6 m wide and 0.35 m deep) on its southern and western sides. The western ditch may have turned at its northern limit towards the east and linked with ditch 1440, though the precise relationship was truncated by later ditches. Ditches 1440 and 1113 may have formed the northern side of the enclosure with a staggered entrance to the enclosure 2.85 m wide. Ditch 1113 was U-shaped in section and measured 7.5 m in length, 0.9 m wide and 0.45 m deep. This latter ditch was cut by the central ditch of the later Phase II enclosures, but a shelf in the profile of the later ditch (in segment 1110) may have represented the vestigial remains of the eastern ditch for the earlier enclosure (Fig. 13, Section 26). The shelf (1921) formed a shallow ledge on the eastern side of the base of ditch 1110 which, like ditch 1113, measured 0.45 m deep. The enclosure had a second entrance in its south-east corner connecting to Enclosure A. Within the enclosure were a number of postholes and a large pit (1099) which may possibly have been related. Unfortunately, none of these internal features could be definitively proven to be contemporary on either stratigraphic or artefactual evidence with the Phase I ditches. A single sherd of Roman greyware pottery was recovered from a small slot (1257), however, this may have been residual. The number of possible structural features was far lower than within Enclosure A.



*Northern Entrance Area (C)*

A triangular area (C) defined by two further ditches lay to the north of the central enclosure and measured approximately 18.5 m by 22 m. The north-western ditch (1023; U-sectioned, 0.61 m wide and 0.14 m deep) was cut by the western driveway ditch (1411) of Phase II. Ditch 1023 appeared to have terminated at this point as it did not continue to the east of the driveway ditch. The western limit of ditch 1023 was truncated by a medieval plough furrow. The eastern ditch (1067) was mostly truncated by the later Phase II enclosure, although the northern end was traceable for a length of 2.6 m. The ditch was U-shaped in section and measured 1.27 m wide and 0.51 m deep. There were traces of two possible external entrances into area C, one in the south-west corner and a second in the north-east corner. A further entrance connected with Enclosure B on the southern side. There was only one internal feature within area C which could be shown to be potentially contemporary. Joining sherds of a second-century mortarium rim were recovered from within two deposits within a corn drying/malting oven (1100) located at the north-eastern limit of the enclosure. The pottery places the construction of the oven within Phase I. Although the material may be residual a radiocarbon date obtained from carbonised cereal grain within the kiln would support a Phase I date for this feature.

The flue of the corn-drying oven (1100) measured 5 m long and comprised an almost vertically sided slot 0.45 m wide leading south-west from a ovoid fire pit (the bedrock base of which showed clear evidence of burning — Figs 10 and 11). The flue then divided into the 2.6 m wide ‘T’ of the oven. The fire pit was 0.55 m deep, the depth of the flue increased towards the ‘T’ (0.7 m deep). There were a number of sandstone slabs within the flue and the fire pit that would suggest the structure had been capped with stone. The backfill deposit excavated from within the corn-dryer was mostly orangy-brown silty-clay mottled with pink, grey and dark blackish-brown clay with frequent small charcoal inclusions. Clear patches of burnt clay were recorded within this deposit, particularly around the junction of the ‘T’, and this was considered to represent the collapsed remains of the superstructure of the oven. That this collapse did not occur until a later phase was evidenced by a South Yorkshire Late Roman Redware sherd (Didsbury, see below) dating to the later third and fourth century found amongst collapsed stonework towards the base of the fire pit. Analysis of the plant remains which comprised the charcoal suggested that the oven had a multi-functional role as corn drier for parching and also for malting (see The charred plant remains, below).

## PHASE II (Fig. 12)

A significantly larger enclosure complex, which comprised a driveway (ditches 1411 and 1412) leading from the north towards the northern and eastern entrances of two large conjoined enclosures, D and E respectively, replaced the enclosures of Phase I. The layout of the driveway ditches respected both enclosures and would suggest that all three components were laid out at approximately the same time. The full extent of the enclosures measured approximately 60 m by 40 m. The entrance into Enclosure D perpetuated the position of the northern entrance of Phase I Enclosure B. The ditches of Enclosures D and E were V-sectioned with rounded bases and survived up to 2 m wide and 1 m deep (Fig. 13). Very few excavated ditch segments contained evidence of silting in their bases suggesting they had been re-cut and cleaned out many times. Up to four separate re-cuts were recorded in some segments, however, where the ditches were cut into solid bedrock it was often not possible to identify any re-cuts since here the ditch would have been easy to re-excavate completely.



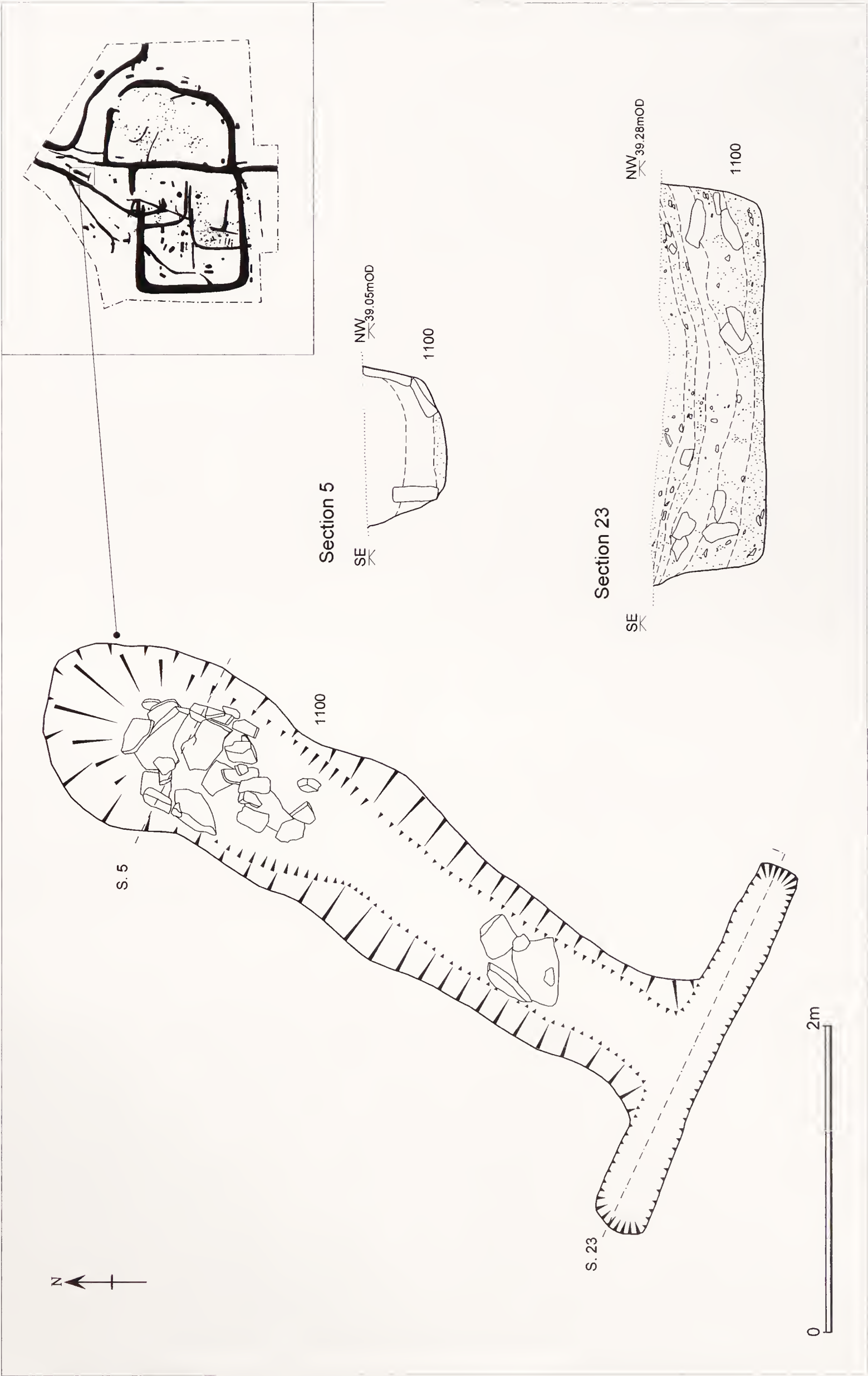


Fig. 10. Plan and sections of corn-drying oven (1100).



Fig. 11. View of corn-drying oven (1100).

The droveway extended northwards down the slope of the hill away from the settlement. The ditches defining the droveway were U-shaped in section and spaced *c.* 3.6 m apart. Twelve sherds of second- to early third-century pottery were recovered from the ditches of the droveway. The western ditch (1411) varied between 0.9 m to 1.8 m wide by up to 0.5 m deep and terminated close to the entrance into the western enclosure (D). The eastern ditch 1412, which measured 1.0–1.3 m wide and up to 0.45 m deep, continued the droveway around the eastern side of Enclosure E before turning due east and merging into a field ditch (1604). Two re-cuts of the droveway ditch (re-cuts 1641 and 1639) appeared to post-date the infilling of the field ditch. Ditch 1604, which was U-shaped in section and measured 2.0 m wide by 0.7 m deep, continued eastwards away from the settlement as part of the associated field system. A single sherd of South Yorkshire Redware pottery of mid-late third-century date was recovered from its fill.

The western rectangular enclosure (D) measured 34 m east to west by 29 m north to south and overlaid both of the sub-rectangular Phase I enclosures. A single entrance opened onto the droveway on the north-east side of the enclosure, perpetuating the position of the entrance into the Phase I enclosure (B). The western enclosure contained a relatively small number of discrete pits and postholes, some of which appeared to form





Fig. 12. Phase II feature plan.

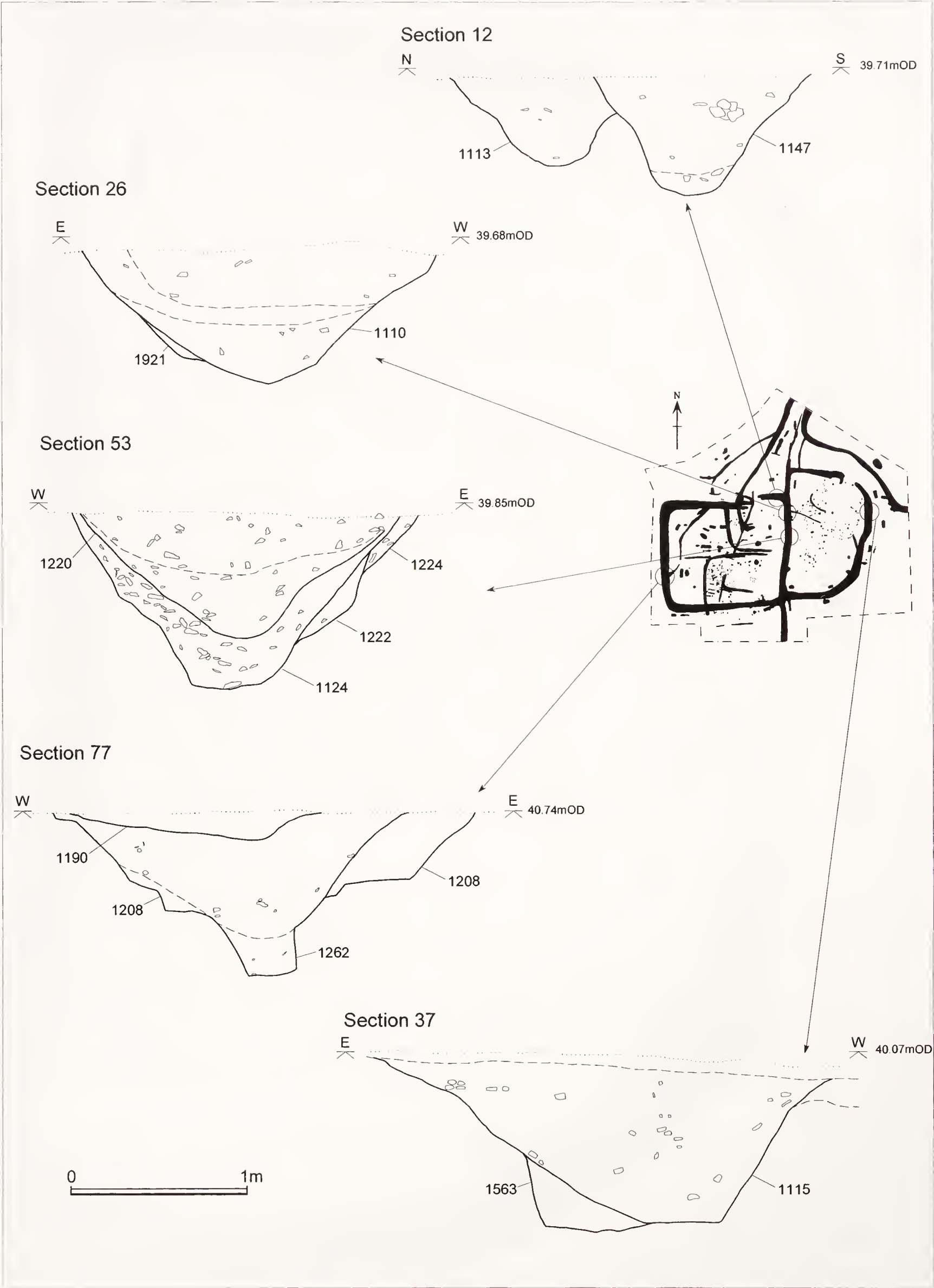


Fig. 13. Selected enclosure ditch sections.



possible fence lines. There was no evidence to suggest that the enclosure had been subdivided or that it contained any major structures. Only one sherd of Romano-British pottery was recovered from within the ditch defining the western enclosure, part of a straight-sided flanged bowl from the early third century (Fig. 22, no. 8). Four sherds of post-medieval pottery had been incorporated into the upper fill of the enclosure ditch as a result of post-depositional processes such as ploughing and worm action.

The eastern D-shaped ditched enclosure (E) measured 35 m north to south by 23 m east to west (Fig. 14). Thirty-five sherds of second- and third-century pottery were recovered from the ditch fills. A gap in the enclosure ditches defined a 3.4 m wide entrance on the north-eastern side. Set within the entrance were two postholes (1813, 408) either side of a worn 'hollow way'. The eastern posthole (408) was quite substantial (0.5 m in diameter and 0.4 m deep) and contained a number of large packing stones which defined a post-pipe *c.* 0.15 m square. The postholes may have formed a gate structure across the entrance. There was a large depression in the underlying bedrock within the northern two-thirds of the enclosure. The depression was filled with a deposit of mid-reddish brown sandy silt (1465) which survived to a maximum depth of 0.30 m. No features were visible cut into this layer, the deposit was subsequently removed in spits by machine. Twenty-five sherds of late third- and early fourth-century pottery were recovered from the layer.

Below layer 1465 a large number of mostly square or sub-circular postholes, were visible cut into the bedrock, both within and outside the depression. Altogether 67 postholes were identified within this enclosure together with a number of pits and slots. The surviving depth of the rock-cut postholes in the centre of the depression varied from only a few millimetres to 0.2 m indicating the postholes were originally cut from a higher level and that there were originally a larger number of postholes within this area than could be identified. A curved slot (1672) which measured *c.* 7.5 m long with an average width of 0.54 m ran down into the hollow, but it could not be clearly associated with a particular structure. The base was of variable depth and contained two post settings and four stakeholes. The depression may have given extra shelter to the exposed ridge-top settlement. An assemblage of 20 sherds of third- to fourth-century pottery was recovered from the features within Enclosure E. The area of the enclosure appeared to have been occupied continually from the second through to the fourth and final phase of Romano-British activity in the settlement.

Several arcs of postholes were identified which may represent sections of former structures (Fig. 14). The largest, and clearest, of these arcs measured *c.* 10 m in diameter and comprised, from the north in a clockwise direction, postholes 1748, 1704, 1744, 1705, 1707, 1711, 1715, 1845, 1843 and 1735 (Structure W). The surviving postholes, most of which were square shaped, ranged between 0.20–0.36 m wide and 0.12–0.18 m deep. The close proximity of some of the postholes, particularly at the south-eastern side of the feature, could suggest some maintenance and re-building of the structure. An inner concentric arc of postholes (1717, 1709, and 1913) may have been internal roof supports for the structure.

The other two principal arcs identified measured approximately 8 m in diameter. Structure X comprised (in a clockwise direction) sub-circular postholes 1795, 1734, 1807, 1810, 434 and square posthole 435, the postholes ranged between 0.48 m in diameter and 0.31 m deep (1784) and 0.25 m in diameter and 0.13 m deep (433). Structure Y was represented by mostly square postholes (421, 423, 427, 1741, 1719, 1687, 1721, 1803 and 1723) which were generally 0.3 m wide and 0.15 m deep. All three putative circular structures (W–Y) would have been intercutting and therefore indicate continued occupation with complete re-building of structures within the enclosure.



Fig. 14. Features within Enclosure E/F.



An arc of postholes (1881, 1863, 1871, 1893 and 1895) which enclosed a further concentration of postholes in the south-west area of the enclosure may represent a further structure (Z). The postholes were mostly square shaped, averaged 0.25 m wide and ranged from 0.12 to 0.29 m in depth and defined a structure *c.* 6 m in diameter. The internal postholes may have functioned as roof supports.

A group of five rectangular pits (1678, 1819, 1821, 1867 and 1907) was identified alongside the southern and eastern ditches of the eastern enclosure. The pits were very steep sided with roughly flat bases. The shape of the pits was grave-like, however, due to the poor preservational conditions, no human remains were recovered and their interpretation remains somewhat tentative. The pits were dug adjacent to the enclosure ditches, a burial pattern recognised on other Iron Age and Romano-British settlements within Yorkshire (Chadwick 1999, 159). Pit 1907 measured approximately 2.2 m long by 0.9 m wide and measured 0.4 m deep, pit 1678 measured 1.8 m by 0.65 m and 0.2 m deep. Pits 1819, 1821 and 1867 measured 1.5 m by 1.1 m, 1.95 m by 0.9 m and 1.85 m by 0.75 m respectively; all three features were *c.* 0.38 m deep. A large proportion (25–50%) of the fills of 1678, 1819 and 1867 comprised sub-angular sandstone fragments which may represent redeposited natural backfill.

### PHASE III (Fig. 15)

Further evidence for the changing layout of the settlement was seen in the southern intersection of Enclosures D and E where the sections suggested a later re-cut of the eastern enclosure through the fill of the western enclosure ditch. The evidence indicated that the eastern enclosure (E) had been re-cut after the ditches of the western enclosure (D) had been deliberately infilled, and this was reflected in the pottery evidence. The later re-cut eastern enclosure (F) contained the single largest combined assemblage from the site, 167 sherds in total, and certain styles of pottery recovered from this group were later than any material from the earlier phases of activity (Figs 23 and 24). Segment 1342 (fill 1343) produced the most sherds (48) recovered from any excavated ditch section and seemed to represent primary or secondary rubbish disposal within the enclosure ditch. The fabrics identified included South Yorkshire Late Redware, South Yorkshire mortarium and many sherds of Dalesware. The combined evidence from this group as a whole suggests activity taking place between the mid-third and mid-fourth centuries. Four coins dated between AD 268 and AD 273 were recovered from the upper fill of the recut F. The nature of the fills of the Phase III enclosure ditch suggested they had been deliberately backfilled.

### PHASE IV (Fig. 16)

Phase IV was characterised by the continued occupation of the site in the period following the infilling of the large enclosure ditches which defined the site during Phases II and III. A number of features were identified cut into the uppermost fills of the enclosure ditches. These included the remains of two possible ovens and a number of pits and several gullies. Two of the gullies (1414 and 1416) within the western part of the site defined an area that contained a number of grave-like pits.

In this final phase there was evidence that settlement was still concentrated within the hollow of the eastern enclosure. The infilling of the natural depression in this area to a depth of 0.30 m with a deposit of sandy silt (1465) appears to have occurred in this period as the pottery recovered from the layer dated to the late third and early fourth century. Although no post-built structures were recognised within this horizon, slot 1830 (Fig. 16), cut the uppermost fill of the western ditch of the enclosure and was partly overlain by layer 1465. Slot 1830 was 9.4 m long, 0.33 m wide with a flat base (0.12 m



Fig. 15. Phase III feature plan.





Fig. 16. Phase IV feature plan.



deep) and vertical sides cut squarely into the bedrock, the base followed the slope down into the depression. Two other linear features, ditch 1101 and a short slot (1152), were cut through the uppermost fills of the south-western corner of Enclosure F. Ditch 1101 was probably a field boundary. It was U-shaped in section and measured 1.6 m wide and 0.45–0.86 m deep and continued beyond the southern limit of excavation. It produced a significant assemblage of pottery which included both Dalesware and Roman greyware.

An oven (1003), which comprised a bed of sandstone blocks sealed with a thick deposit of burnt clay, was cut into the upper fill of Enclosure F (Figs 17 and 19). The oven measured 2.45 m long by 1.4 m wide and 0.28 m deep. The surface of the stones was concave, though this may have been due to slumping and compression of the underlying fill of the enclosure ditch. The stone base of the oven covered an area approximately 1.05 m by 1.20 m. The southern end consisted of a slightly raised flat sandstone block lying between two vertical stone slabs which may have formed the stokehole. Immediately to the south of this, within the cut for the oven, was a deposit of silty charcoal which appeared to represent rake-out material. The charcoal comprised mainly heather stems together with a few fragments of hazel and oak roundwood. Samples of burnt clay taken for archaeomagnetic dating gave only a broadly Roman date range.

The remains of another flue structure (1134) were identified cut into the upper fills of the western enclosure ditch (D) (Fig. 17). The feature comprised a linear flue 2.3 m long, 0.4 m wide and 0.23 m deep with two small side projections a third of the way along its length. The lower fill contained large quantities of roundwood charcoal, and very little charred plant remains. The surrounding natural subsoil, which was cut by both the flue and the side projections, was heavily heat affected and was overlain by lenses and lumps of burnt clay. No pottery or other artefacts were recovered from the feature.

Overlying the western enclosure were two irregular gullies (1414 and 1416) which appeared to enclose a series of rectangular pits. Two other gullies (1165 and 1418) appeared to be associated features based on their alignments, although in total the gullies form a rather irregular arrangement. The gullies measured between 0.6 m and 0.85 m wide and were generally quite shallow (0.2 m to 0.44 m deep) with vertical sides and a flat base. Only two sherds of undiagnostic grey ware were recovered from gully 1414, but some fifty-seven sherds of pottery were recovered from the fills of gully 1416, the assemblage characterised by large sherds principally from greyware club-rimmed bowls (Fig. 25 nos 43–46). Altogether 44 sherds of pottery were recovered from gully 1418. The pottery ranged from second-century forms through to the fourth century and included a sherd of late third- or fourth-century mortarium.

A number of slots (1574, 1576 and 1578) were aligned with gully 1418 and therefore may represent a contemporaneous Phase IV structure within this area of the site. These slots were generally 0.4 m wide and contained four post and two stake settings within their base. Twenty-three sherds of third-century pottery were also recovered from pit 1149 within this area which would suggest that this pit relates to this phase. Pit 1149 measured 0.85 m by 0.75 m and was 0.35 m deep and contained two fills.

### *Grave Shaped Features*

A group of seven large rectangular pits (1181, 1212, 1214, 1269, 1271, 1279 and 1362) were clustered together in an area roughly defined by gullies 1414, 1416 and 1165 (Figs 18 and 20). Pit 1181 was the largest of these and measured 2.96 m long by 0.94 m wide and 0.45 m deep and had a posthole cut within its south-west corner which may represent a grave marker (Fig. 21). A complete, though fractured *in-situ*, vessel of red slipped imitation samian ware, dating to sometime after AD 240, was recovered from the western



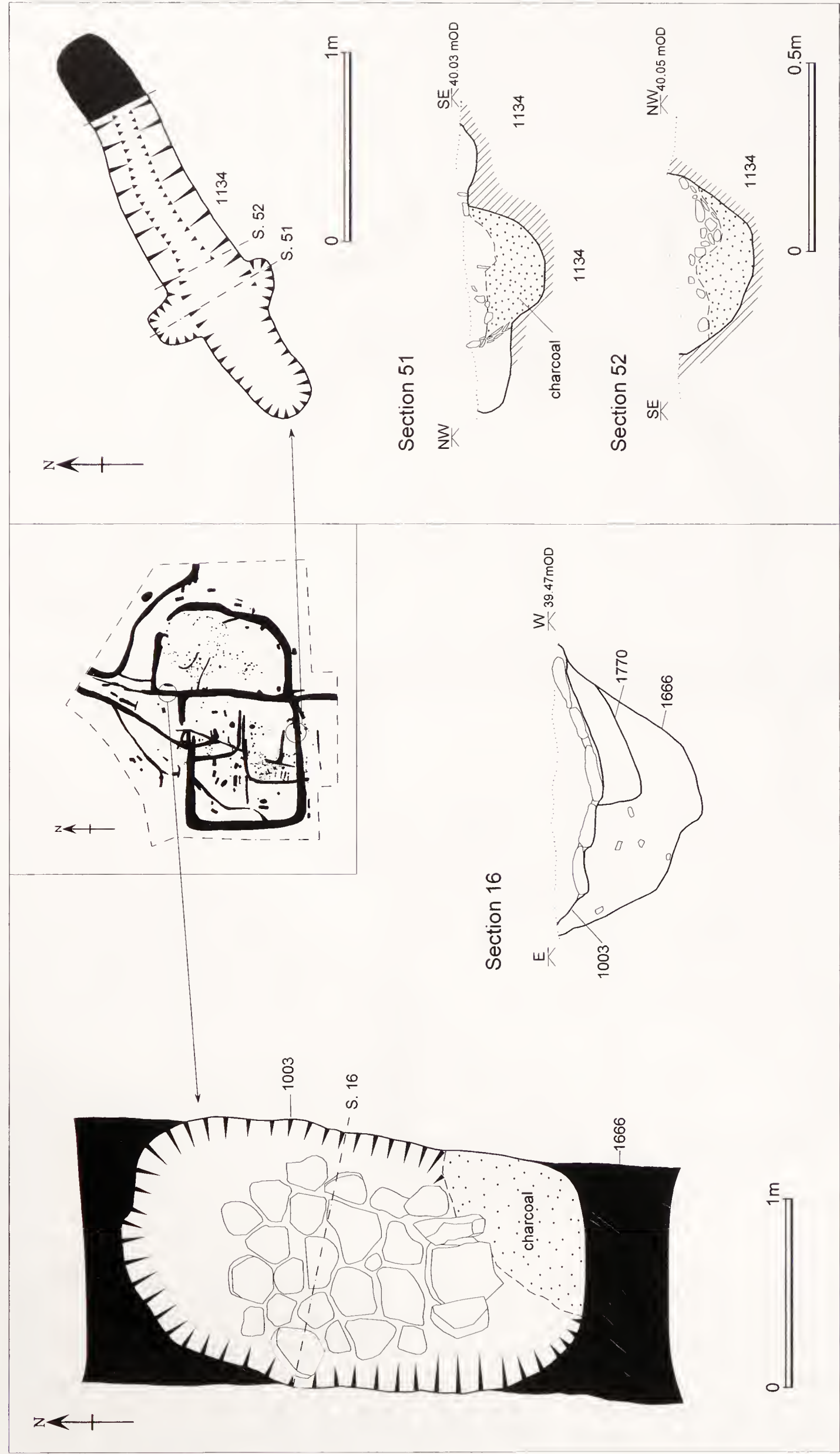


Fig. 17. Plans and sections of hearth 1003 and flue 1134.





Fig. 18. General view of the north-west corner of Enclosure D, showing possible grave features.

end of the feature (Fig. 25, no. 49). The vessel showed heavy signs of pre-depositional abrasion. The other large pits had the following dimensions: 1269, 2.0 m by 0.83 m and 0.25 m deep; 1271, 2.0 m by 0.5 m wide and 0.09 m deep; 1279, 2.5 m by 1.0 m and 0.5 m deep; and 1362, 1.6 m by 0.9 m and 0.2 m deep. The two smaller pits 1212 and 1214 measured only 0.82 m by 0.7 m and 0.1 m deep and 1.63 m long by 0.95 m wide and 0.3 m deep respectively. All of the pits were cut into the bedrock, and the fills contained a large proportion of sandstone fragments indicative of deliberate backfilling as opposed to natural silting or refuse. All were aligned approximately east to west.

To the north of the main group were three further pits 1273, 1331 and 1341. Pit 1273 cut a short curvilinear slot and was aligned north to south. It measured 2.1 m long, 0.9 m wide and 0.5 m deep, while pit 1331 measured 1.85 m long, 0.67 m wide and 0.76 m deep and pit 1341 1.73 m long, 0.5 m wide and 0.3 m deep. The latter two features may have been contemporary with the Phase I ditch 1423, which they paralleled on a south-west to north-east orientation. In the centre of the site, aligned north to south, pit 1379 measured 1.6 m long, 0.9 m wide and 0.4 m deep and immediately to the south was another rectangular pit, 1516 (1.9 m long, 0.75 m wide and 0.25 m deep) that contained two postholes (1518 and 1495).

South of ditch 1165 were two pits orientated north to south (1557 and 1559). Pit 1559 was rectangular and measured 2.68 m long by 0.68 m wide and 0.31 m deep while pit 1557 measured 1.9 m long by 1.2 m wide and 0.57 m deep. This latter pit was noticeably wider than the other pits and was almost oval in plan. Northwest of ditch 1414 were two further large rectangular pits (1277, 1 m by 0.62 m and 0.21 m deep), and (1044; 2.2 m by 0.9 m and 0.23 m deep) which was aligned south-west to north-east parallel to Phase IV ditch 1414.





Fig. 19. Section across hearth (1003) cut into enclosure ditch (1403).

Despite their form, none of the above rectangular pits was found to contain any trace of human bone on excavation or in the soil samples which were recovered from them.

THE POTTERY

*Peter Didsbury*

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

A total of 670 sherds of pottery, weighing 18,340 g, and having an average sherd weight (hereafter ASW) of 27.4 g, was recovered from the excavations. The overall rim EVEs value for the whole site was 12.33. The high ASW and EVEs values probably reflect the practice of primary or secondary rubbish disposal into enclosure ditches, with little subsequent post-depositional disturbance.

The material examined falls into two principal chronological groupings. The great majority results from second- to fourth-century Romano-British occupation of the site; the remainder spans the eleventh or twelfth century to the recent past, and largely reflects late medieval to modern agricultural use (Table 1).

TABLE 1: Chronological distribution of the wares (by % of rim EVEs)

Period:	Romano-British	Medieval	Post-medieval
% rim EVEs	96.8	0.3	2.9



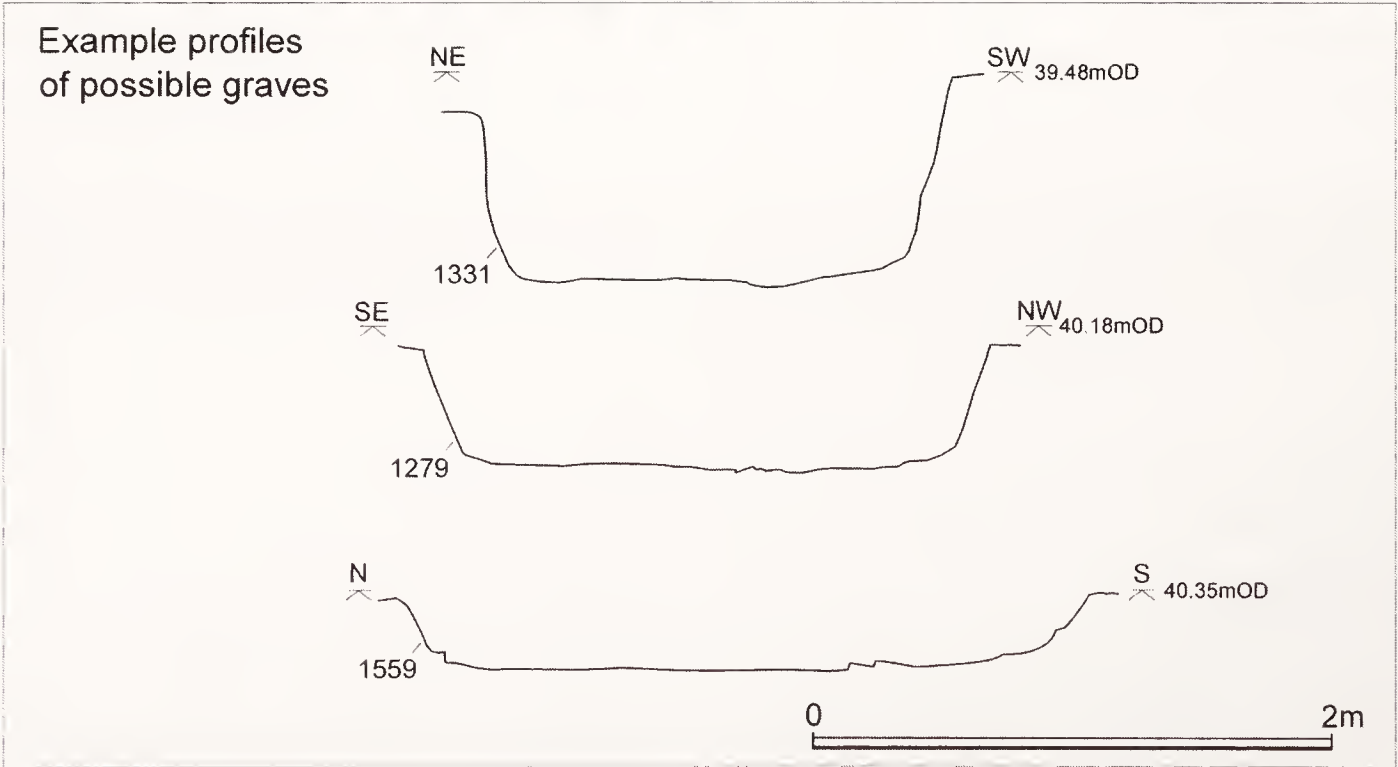
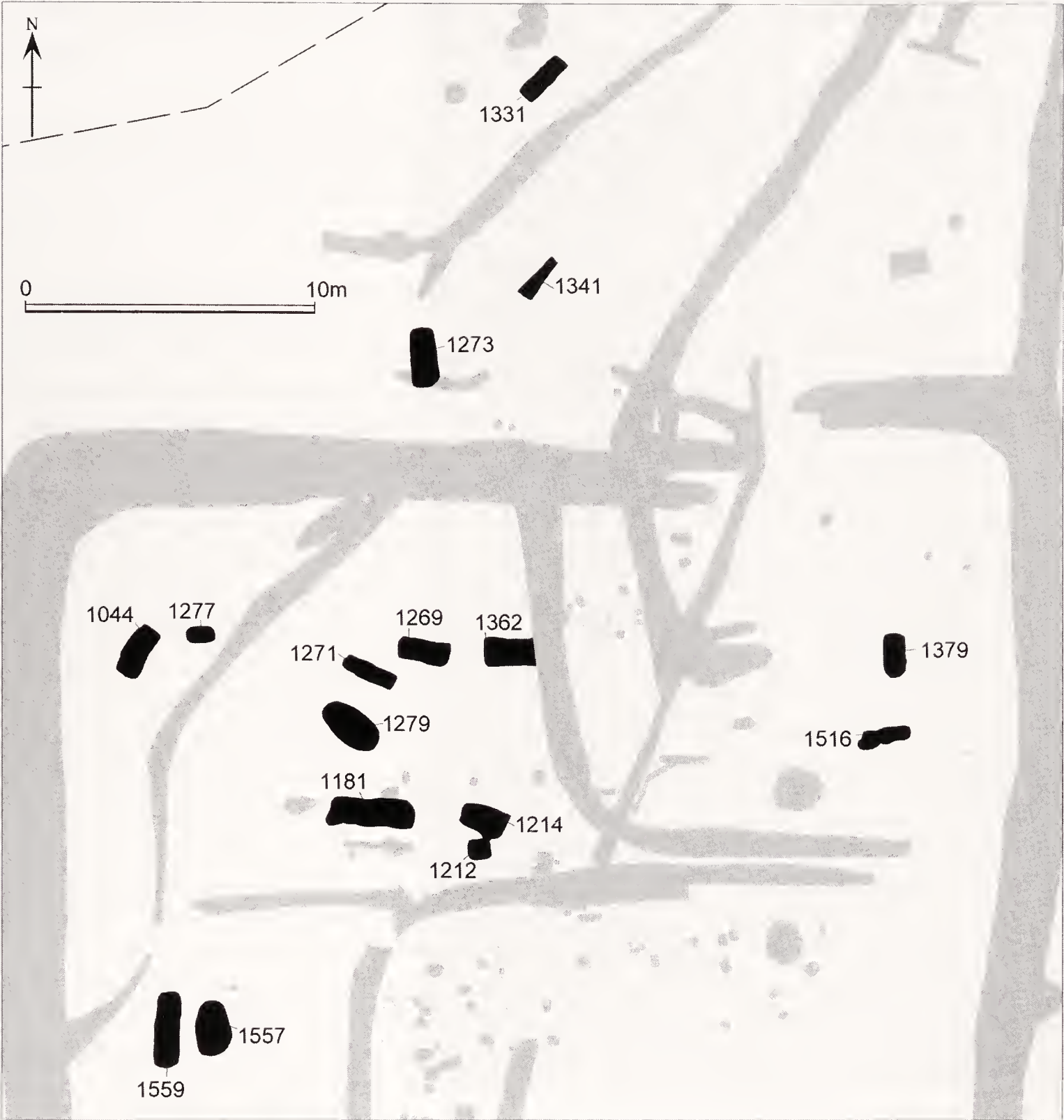


Fig. 20. Possible graves in western area of excavation.





Fig. 21. Fully excavated possible grave (1081) facing east.

The samian and mortaria are presented as discreet reports below, the remaining pottery being dealt with throughout the remaining sections, beginning with a phase by phase summary of the ceramic dating evidence, and in a detailed illustration catalogue.

## SAMIAN

*by Brenda Dickinson*

Only two vessels, each represented by two sherds, were found. These are: a Central Gaulish form 31, of mid- to late Antonine date (*fill 1125 of ditch segment 1124, Enclosure F, Phase III*); and an unsourced Antonine bowl (*layer 1173, Phase II/IV*). Neither is illustrated.



## MORTARIA AND A POSSIBLE MORTARIUM

by Kay Hartley

Notes: 'right facing' and 'left facing' when applied to stamps indicate the relation of the stamp to the spout, looking at the mortarium from the outside.

Illustration no.

- 3 A mortarium in orange-brown fabric with brown core (Munsell 7.5YR 4/4) and cream slip. Inclusions: frequent, mostly smallish quartz with some random small and a few large red-brown and black slag. The trituration grit consists of mixed medium to largish, mostly black slag, some quartz sandstone, orange-brown sandstone and haematite. Worn and slightly burnt. The left-facing stamp survives. This is the first example of this illegible if not illiterate stamp which has been found away from the potter's production area. Two of his mortaria have been found on the kiln-site at Rossington Bridge (Buckland, Hartley and Rigby 2001) and two at nearby Cantley (Buckland and Magilton, in preparation), both sites south-east of Doncaster. Production of mortaria on these sites began in the mid-second century and although Rossington was much the more important in the second century, there is no reason why this potter should not have been active on both sites, not necessarily at the same time. The date when production started here indicates that this potter was active within the period AD 140–170. (see Tomber and Dore 1998, 202–03 for Rossington, and 194 for Cantley). (Wt 240 g, diameter 300 mm, total EVES 0.22. *Fill 207 and fill 1059 of corn-drying oven 1100, Phase I*).
- 32 Two joining sherds and two other joining sherds from the same vessel in orange-brown fabric with dark grey core and traces of cream slip. Inclusions: fairly frequent, ill-sorted and random quartz with some red-brown slag and rare black ?slag. There are few possible trituration grits visible with X20 lens and these could well be strays or inclusions showing on the surface. There is no reason why this form should not have been used for a mortarium, but the turning marks on the interior would be exceptional on a mortarium and it seems more likely that it is a flanged bowl. Bowls of this type are well represented among the waste pottery at Cantley (Buckland and Magilton, in preparation) though they were also produced at Branton (Buckland 1976, Fig. 4, no. 30), and perhaps elsewhere in the area. They often had triangular motifs painted on the flange at intervals. Probably late third or fourth century. (Wt 21 g, diameter 240 mm, total EVEs 0.325. *Fill 1125 of ditch segment 1124, Enclosure F, Phase III; and fill 1336 of segment 1333, gully 1418, Phase IV*).
- None Heavily worn base fragment from a very heavily worn mortarium in grey fabric. Inclusions: frequent, moderately well-sorted quartz. The trituration grit consisted mainly of black slag with some quartz and rare, softish, white material (non-reactive). There is growing evidence that some mortaria were deliberately reduced in north-east Yorkshire (Creighton 1999, illust. 5.38, M4, personally examined). They were commonest in East Anglia where they were made in small workshops (Darling 1993, 198, figs 161 and 162). Reduced mortaria were only ever reasonably common in East Anglia where most, if not all, are dated later than c. AD 250. This is the first recorded example from South Yorkshire of a mortarium in reduced fabric; it may have been made in East Yorkshire or even possibly South Yorkshire. It is not strictly datable, but as a mortarium in reduced ware it is likely to be later than the second century. The predominance of black slag in the trituration grit also tends to support a date in the third century or later. (Wt 115 g *Layer 1465, Phase II–IV*).



None Indeterminate, burnt sherd perhaps from the base of a mortarium, in fine-textured, micaceous pinkish-cream fabric. Inclusions: few, random quartz, red-brown and black with one large softish white fragment. Workshops at Castleford and South Carlton, Lincoln are the most likely sources; both were active in the second century. (Wt 3 g *Topsoil 1000*).

## CERAMIC DATING EVIDENCE

### *Phase I (illustration nos 1–4)*

The pottery dating evidence for this phase is limited, given the small amount of material recovered.

The ditches of Enclosure B contained two greyware wide-mouthed bowls, and single body sherds of Romano-British shell-tempered ware and Cantley-type greyware. The bowl with externally grooved rim (Fig. 22, no. 1) is a type which does not seem to occur at either the Blaxton (Buckland and Dolby 1980) or Branton (Buckland 1976) production centres, but there are close parallels for it at Cantley Kilns 9–25 within Type H(c) (Cregeen 1957), and at Rossington Bridge (Buckland *et al.* 2001). The bowl with rim expanded both internally and externally (Fig. 22, no. 2) exemplifies a long-lived variant which occurs at all the above-named centres and appears to have been produced throughout most of the life of the South Yorkshire industries. An associated body sherd of shell-tempered ware is indistinguishable in fabric and colouration from the Dalesware jars of Phase II onwards, so a date after *c.* AD 190, at the earliest, is to be preferred as a depositional *terminus post quem*. The pottery provides no evidence for the date at which these ditches were dug, or for their duration, but does tend to suggest that they were open in the late second and third centuries. This does not contradict the radio-carbon determinations for context 1664 in phase I (Table 9), but these are so broad as to be of little use.

Among the remaining handful of body sherds from this phase may be mentioned a sherd of Black Burnished Ware (possibly a Rossington Bridge product) and a white flagon fragment, possibly of second-century date. Both these come from the internal features of Enclosure A. Fill 1502 of segment 1501, gully 1416 produced two body sherds in a fabric close to that of the 'blue-burnished grey ware' of the second- and third-century phases at Dragonby (Gregory 1996, 515).

Joining sherds of an early to mid-Antonine second-century stamped *mortarium* (Fig. 22, no. 3) recovered from fills 207 and 1059 of corn-drying oven 1100 place the feature within Phase I (see Mortaria, above). It is unfortunate that both the earliest and the latest diagnostic material from this phase (*viz.* the mortaria and a South Yorkshire oxidised fabric) should come from the oven fills. However, evidence the oven may have had a prolonged use, or was not levelled, until the mid- to late third century or later is provided by the first occurrence, in fill 205 of the corn-drying oven, of 'South Yorkshire Late Roman Redware', the term here adopted to signify the local variant of those red-slipped derivatives of samian forms which were produced by several industries in Britain after the end of samian importation in the mid-third century (Fig. 22, no. 4). Buckland *et al.* (1980) ascribe the local version, principally copies of samian forms 31, 35/6 and 38, to the later third and fourth century, and list them as having been made at Cantley, kilns 7, 33–34 and 37–39, with a few fragments also known from Branton.

### *Phase II (illustration nos 5–13)*

The driveway ditches 1411 and 1412 yielded only a small amount of pottery, mainly greywares, but including single sherds of oxidised ware, hand-made ware in a 'native' tradition, and a fragment of fine, orange-red colour-coated ware, unattributed to source.



Two greyware jar rims (Fig. 22, nos 5–6) can both be paralleled in regional groups from the second and earlier third century onwards.

Turning to the enclosure groups, Dalesware jars appear in the fills of enclosure ditches 1446 and 1505 in Enclosure E, and in that of field ditch 1101 in Group 1156 (Fig. 22, nos 7, 12). This ware was in production in the period *c.* AD 190–350, and its presence suggests that the enclosure ditches were open in at least the third, and possibly the early fourth century. This date range is not refined by associated vessels in these groups, which tend to be long-lived greyware forms made throughout the production period of the South Yorkshire industry without any appreciable typological change (e.g. Fig. 22, nos 9, 11).

Evidence from the other Groups of this Phase is unsatisfactory. A small amount of pottery from the possible 'grave-fills' of Group 1406 is not clearly datable, while only a single sherd of Roman pottery was recovered from the ditches of western Enclosure D, the remainder having a possible late twelfth to sixteenth-century date-range. The Roman sherd in question (Fig. 22, no. 8) is a small rim fragment from a straight-sided flanged bowl or dish with grooved lip from the fill of enclosure ditch 504 = 1261. These forms are considered to have first appeared on Hadrian's Wall in the period *c.* 180–210 (Gillam 1973, 60), but are most common in Yorkshire and the Humber region from post-Severan times onwards.

The assemblage from fill 1116 of enclosure ditch 1115 in Enclosure E is also composed of sixteenth-century material, with the exception of a single sherd of Roman greyware.

### *Phase III (illustration nos 14–38)*

All material of this phase comes from Enclosure F, which thus provides the single largest combined assemblage from the site (30.4% of the site assemblage by number of sherds, 35.9% by weight, 26.1% by rim EVEs), and the constituent material is all Romano-British. The assemblage has a high proportion of large sherds, the ASW for the phase being rather higher, at 32.3 grams, than that for the site as a whole, and may represent primary or secondary rubbish disposal within the enclosure ditches. Within the Group there are vessel joins between fill 1104 of ditch segment 1103, and fill 1422 of ditch segment 1421; both of Enclosure F (Fig. 23, no. 21), and between the two fills (1503 and 1504) of ditch segment 1497, Enclosure F (Fig. 24, no. 27). Fill 1503 of the latter ditch also provides a join with a vessel in fill 1247 of ditch segment 1248 from Phase II Enclosure B. Sherds of a single large bowl (Fig. 23, no. 18) link fill 1343 of ditch segment 1342, Enclosure F and fill 1548 of segment 1584, gully 1418 (Phase IV) with fill 1022 of ditch segment 1021, Enclosure F (Phase IV). Finally, there is also a join between sherds of a later third- or fourth-century bowl or mortarium (Fig. 24, no. 32) from fill 1125 of enclosure ditch 1124, Enclosure F, Phase III and fill 1336 of segment 1333, gully 1418, Phase IV).

Apart from the above-mentioned bowl, the only new form to appear is the hemispherical flanged bowl (Fig. 24, no. 28), a type which, as a South Yorkshire greyware product, appears to be best represented at the fourth-century Branton kilns, though examples are also known from the earlier production centre at Blaxton (see Catalogue). No other new diagnostic types of material appear in this phase, though there are some changes in emphasis. Dalesware jars are now common, appearing in enclosure ditches 1103, 1220 and 1497, and post-hole 1426 (Fig. 23, nos 22–24). South Yorkshire Late Roman Redware occurs as imitation form 31 bowls (Fig. 23, no. 20, Fig. 24, no. 27) in enclosure ditches 1124, 1497 and 1342, in the latter case in association with a coin dated AD 270+. Indeed, all the coins from the site date from the final years of the Gallic Empire, and with the exception of two coins from layer 1173, all come from Phase III. Thus, the combined



evidence from this Group suggests that deposition within the enclosure ditches represents site activity taking place between the mid-third and mid-fourth centuries. Some earlier residual material does occur, notably in enclosure ditch 1124, which contains a mid- to late Antonine samian form 31, and a stubby-rimmed jar in shell-tempered fabric, a type with parallels throughout the first and second centuries in the East Midlands (Fig. 24, no. 31). Finally, a group of three vessels in the same greyware fabric (Fig. 24, nos 33, 36 and Fig. 25, no. 42) may also point to an 'Antonine' component in the Phase III and Phase IV assemblages.

*Phase IV (illustration nos 38–49)*

No pottery was associated with the hearth 1003 or feature 1134. Fill 1154 of the latter, again without pottery, yielded a radiocarbon determination between the mid-third and mid-fifth century.

The fills of the slots segments in gully 1416 are characterised by large sherds principally from greyware large bowls and straight-sided flanged bowls, perfectly in keeping with the pottery of the phase as a whole, though a Black-Burnished Ware jar rim fragment (Fig. 25, no. 47) may represent a residual element in the assemblage. It should also be noted that context 1450 within this group contains a single sherd of fifteenth- or sixteenth-century South Yorkshire Gritty Ware (Rawmarsh/Firsby type) (Watkins 1987, 118).

Finally, we turn to the features interpreted as graves, cemetery and related features of Groups 1408 (Phase III–IV), 1409 and 1414. In Group 1409, grave-fill 1182 contained a broken but complete South Yorkshire Late Roman Redware bowl imitating form 31 (Fig. 25, no. 49). Slot segment 1239 in ditch 1414 contained two sherds of greyware, including the rim of a small globular necked jar of uncertain date (Fig. 25, no. 48). Grave 1277 in Group 1408 yielded only a minute speck of nineteenth-century whiteware.

*Phase II–IV (illustration nos 50–57)*

The settlement related features of Group 1405 yielded only a small amount of material. The most clearly datable vessel is a South Yorkshire Late Roman Redware imitation form 36 from posthole/pit 1703 and layer 1465.

*Discussion*

It will be seen from the above that the overall date-range of the Romano-British assemblage, including unstratified material, may extend from the middle of the second century to the middle of the fourth. A complete absence of Huntcliff ware, which supplanted Dalesware as the dominant all-purpose coarseware jar in Yorkshire in the middle of the fourth century, suggests a lack of activity resulting in ceramic deposition on the site after *c.* AD 350 (Buckland *et al.* 1980, 147). East Yorkshire greywares of the Holme industry, which should also have been gaining an increased market share in South Yorkshire in the latest period, are also significantly entirely lacking, as are such late Lincolnshire forms as Swanpool Form H (Webster and Booth 1947) and the kinds of lid-seated jar represented at The Park, Lincoln (Darling 1977). Indeed, it is not *absolutely* certain on ceramic grounds that the site was occupied into the fourth century at all, since all the latest types present, i.e. South Yorkshire Late Redwares, Dalesware, and some of the greyware straight-sided flanged bowls, could equally well all have been in contemporary use at the end of the third century. An unstratified simple-rim dish with burnished arcading (Fig. 26, no. 65), apparently imitating a South-East Dorset BB1 form common in the late third and fourth century may also be mentioned in this context.

As far as the fabric and formal composition of the site assemblage is concerned, the emphasis is very much on heavy-duty, domestic, kitchen coarsewares. The value of the

figures in Table 2 is constrained by various factors, including the presence of a complete vessel and the difficulty of establishing the precise proportion of residual material, but the high proportion of bowls is certainly what might be expected on a site of the date here proposed. There is an almost total absence of finewares, with samian represented by two vessels, and colour-coated beakers and white flagons each represented by single sherds, to which must probably be added the uncategorised white-slipped vessel (Fig. 22, no. 13). All of these may belong to the second-century phase of site activity which has been postulated above, as do two of the three mortaria. It is difficult to know what proportion of the original ‘early’ assemblage these might have formed, but the general impression is that this may never have been a community with pretensions to status or with much use for the accoutrements of a Romanising cuisine and lifestyle. It would seem that it was not until local production of imitation samian forms started in the mid- to late third century that the site acquired any ‘tablewares’ to speak of.

The conservatism of the South Yorkshire industries (Buckland and Dolby 1980, 34), reflected in the fact that many forms like the large bowl underwent almost no typological change through the whole production period, makes the close dating of this kind of rural assemblage difficult, and these problems are compounded by the way in which some of the important kiln-groups from the region, notably the Cantley series, were first published. Bearing these strictures in mind, however, and with the aid of certain diagnostic types and coin evidence, it seems clear that Phase I and II features were in use in the third century, and that Phase III and IV activity must probably be fitted into the century between *c.* AD 250 and 350.

TABLE 2: Formal composition of the Roman assemblage (% rim EVEs, n = 12.09)

TYPE	%
<b>Jars:</b>	<b>(30.1)</b>
Greyware	23.1
Dalesware	5.0
Oxidised	0.8
Handmade shelly	0.8
Black Burnished	0.4
<b>Bowls:</b>	<b>(39.6)</b>
Greyware large (“wide-mouthed”)	17.5
Greyware shouldered	10.1
Greyware straight-sided flanged	3.4
Oxidised	2.7
Greyware reeded rim	2.3
Greyware hemispherical flanged	2.0
Oxidised hemispherical flanged	0.8
Greyware small	0.8
<b>Dishes:</b>	<b>(24.2)</b>
SYLRR form 31	13.1
SYLRR form 36	6.0
Greyware flanged	4.1
Greyware	1.0
<b>Mortaria:</b>	<b>4.4</b>
<b>Unclassified greyware:</b>	<b>1.5</b>
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>99.8</b>



The incidence of post-Roman material has been referred to above. The site seems to have seen almost no activity which resulted in ceramic deposition between the end of the Romano-British occupation and the late fifteenth or sixteenth century. At this period purple-glazed products of the local industries in Coal Measure fabrics begin to appear, and may reflect a phase of manuring for arable use starting at this period.

## CATALOGUE OF ILLUSTRATED VESSELS

### *Phase I*

1. Greyware. Large bowl with outbent rim, grooved on the exterior. Dark grey surfaces, grey core, brown core margins. Moderate quartz to *c.* 1 mm, and occasional other stone temper and perhaps grog to *c.* 3 mm. Cf. Cregeen 1957, Fig. 4, nos 149, 150; Samuels 1983, fig. 124, no. 20. *Fill 1365 of ditch segment 1364, Enclosure B.*
2. Greyware. Large bowl with rim expanded both internally and externally. Grey surfaces, pale grey margins, dark grey core. Remains of burnishing on top of rim. Cf. Cregeen 1957, fig. 5, no. 175; Buckland and Dolby 1980, fig. 7, no. 202; Buckland 1976, fig. 6, nos 76–77, and fig. 7, no. 103; Samuels 1983, fig. 124, no. 8. *Fill 1247 of ditch segment 1248, Enclosure B, and fill 1503 of ditch segment 1497, Enclosure F (Phase III).*
3. See 'Mortaria'.
4. Late Roman South Yorkshire Redware. Bowl. Samian form 31 derivative. Fairly coarse-textured reddish-orange ware, in this case with smoothed self-coloured surfaces. *Fill 205 of corn-drying oven 1100.*

### *Phase II*

5. Greyware. Jar or small bowl. Sandy blue-grey fabric, with harsh surfaces. *Fill 1029 of segment 1026 of droveway ditch 1411.*
6. Greyware. Jar with outcurved rim. Sandy fabric. Worn. Cf. Gregory 1996, fig. 20.6, no. 849, in a second-century group. *Fill 211 of segment 210 of droveway ditch 1411.*
7. Dalesware. Jar. Leached of original temper. *Fill 1506 of ditch segment 1505, Enclosure E.*
8. Greyware. Straight-sided flanged bowl/dish with grooved lip. Sandy greyware, with worn reddish-brown exterior. *Fill 1506 of ditch segment 1505, Enclosure E.*
9. Greyware. Shouldered bowl. Worn sandy fabric, with dark grey surfaces, brown core margins and light grey core. Decoration of intersecting arcs. Cf. Form H(b) at Cantley (Cregeen 1957), Blaxton (Buckland and Dolby 1980) and Branton (Buckland 1976). *Fill 1120 of ditch segment 1423, Enclosure E.*
10. Tile fragment. Soft, fine, light pinkish red fabric, largely inclusion free apart from common dark red material, less than 1 mm. It may have been rubbed down to give the present corner angle of less than 90 degrees. There is an opposed pair of crudely hollowed perforations, in the narrow faces either side of the corner. In its general characteristics, it resembles triangular thatch- or loom-weights in other Iron Age and Roman ceramic fabrics, e.g. 'briquettage' examples from Droitwich (Woodiwiss 1992, fig. 38). Damage to the corner itself resembles suspension abrasion, though the holes themselves do not completely penetrate the object, so a suspension cord can never have been passed through. It may also be noted that apparent triangular loomweights of similar form were found as part of the kiln-load of the second-century Kiln 2 at Newton on Trent (Field and Palmer-Brown 1991, fig. 14, no. 4). *Fill 1666 of ditch segment 1667, Enclosure E.*
11. Greyware. Shouldered bowl, as no. 7. Decoration of burnished intersecting wavy lines, between two burnished zones. *Fill 1102 of field-ditch 1101, Group 1156.*
12. Dalesware. Jar. Leached of original temper. *Fill 1102 of field-ditch 1101, Group 1156.*
13. White-slipped oxidised ware. Form and orientation uncertain. Fine, soft, highly laminated, pink fabric, almost inclusion free, though there is a white, non-reactive, inclusion *c.* 3 mm, visible on the interior surface. Remains of a cream slip on both surfaces, and of reddish-brown 'paint'. The latter probably originally formed a 10–15 mm deep band below the applied impressed cordon, and there are further traces towards the bottom of the extant profile. The vessel is highly worn and very fragmentary. *Fill 1102 of field ditch 1101, Group 1156.*

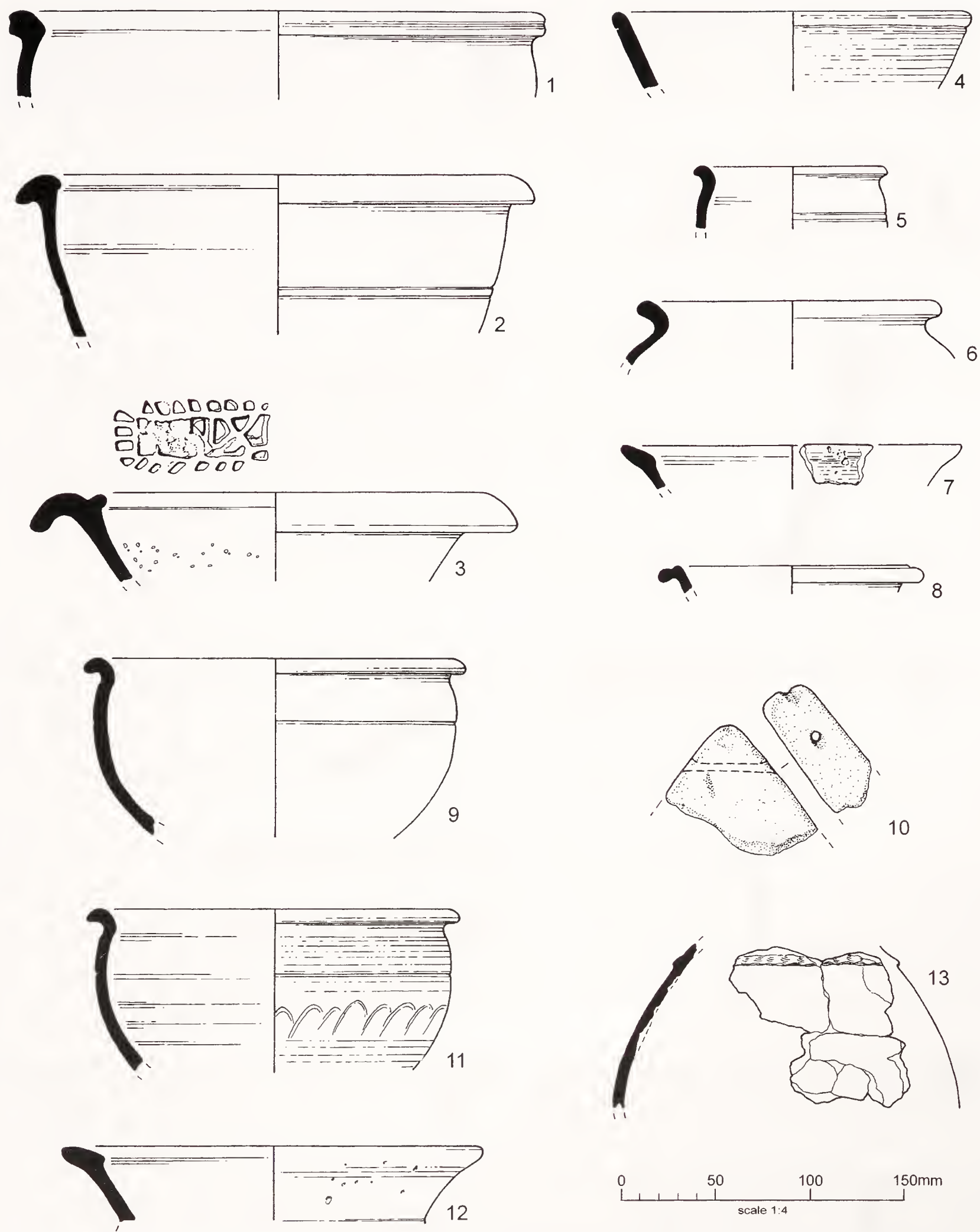


Fig. 22. Phase I vessels 1-4, Phase II vessels 5-13.

Phase III

- 14. Greyware. Round-shouldered jar with short everted rim. Grey body, very dark grey surfaces. *Fill 1189 of ditch segment 1188, Enclosure F.*
- 15. Greyware. Closely similar form and fabric to no. 9, with lightly incised acute-angled lattice beginning below the neck. *Fill 1189 of ditch segment 1188, Enclosure F.*



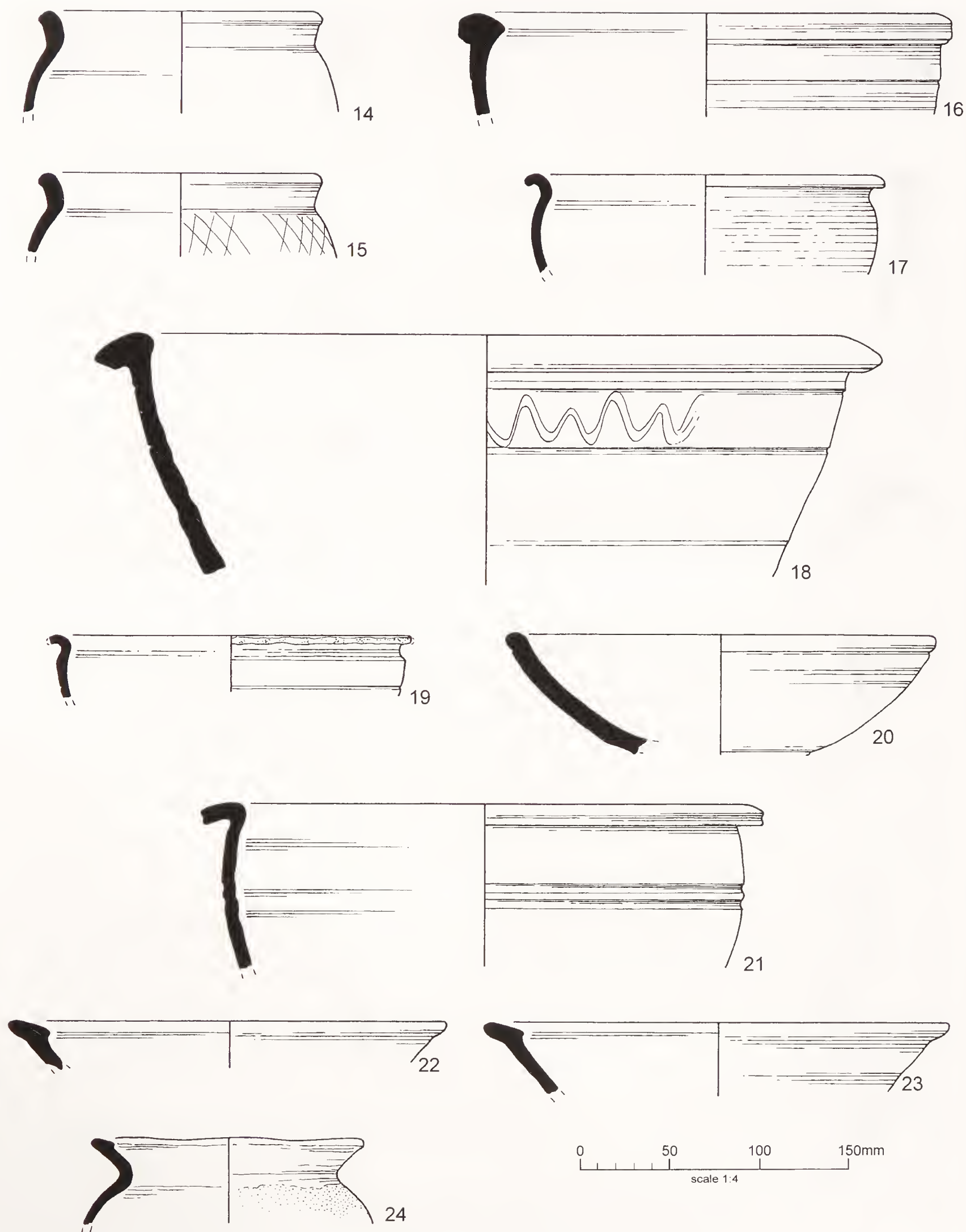


Fig. 23. Phase III vessels 14-24

16. Greyware. Large bowl. Sandy light grey with brown surfaces. The rim is expanded both internally and externally, and its leading edge is lightly grooved. *Fill 1375 of ditch segment 1374, Enclosure F.*
17. Greyware. Small shouldered bowl. Fine hard greyware with burnished blue-grey surfaces. *Fill 1343 of ditch segment 1342, Enclosure F.*

18. Greyware. Large bowl. Orange core, brownish grey surfaces. Incised running scroll between grooves. Cf. Buckland 1976, fig. 7, no. 79. *Fill 1343 of ditch segment 1342, Enclosure F; fill 1022 of ditch segment 1021, Enclosure F (Phase III); and fill 1548 of segment 1584, gully 1418 (Phase IV).*
19. Greyware. Shouldered bowl? Fine, hard burnished blue-grey ware. The rim profile is not fully extant. *Fill 1343 of enclosure ditch 1342, Enclosure F.*
20. Late Roman South Yorkshire Redware. Bowl. Samian form 31 derivative. Fairly coarse orange-brown fabric with red surfaces, the latter largely worn away. *Fill 1343 of ditch segment 1342, Enclosure F.*
21. Greyware. Large bowl. The rim flange is down-turned and has a grooved leading edge. Sandy mid-grey ware with brownish surfaces. Abraded. *Fill 1104 of ditch segment 1103, and fill 1422 of ditch segment 1421; both of Enclosure F.*
22. Dalesware. Jar. Leached of original temper. *Fill 1104 of ditch segment 1103, Enclosure F.*
23. Dalesware. Jar. Leached of original temper. *Fill 1422 of segment ditch 1421, Enclosure F.*
24. Dalesware. Jar. Leached of original temper. Extensive carbonised deposits to a depth of 10 mm below junction of rim and neck on exterior, and traces on top of the rim and the upper part of the rim interior. *Fill 1503 of ditch segment 1497, Enclosure F.*
25. Greyware. Large bowl. Sandy light grey with darker surfaces. *Fill 1504 of ditch segment 1497, Enclosure F.*
26. Greyware. Straight-sided flanged bowl. Orange patches on interior surface. Very abraded. *Fill 1504 of ditch segment 1497, Enclosure F.*
27. Late Roman South Yorkshire Redware. Bowl. Samian form 31 derivative. Fabric as no. 19, but reddish colouration only on parts of the interior. Exterior self-coloured. *Fills 1503 and 1504 of ditch segment 1497, Enclosure F.*
28. Greyware. Hemispherical flanged bowl. Sandy fabric with wheel-burnished blue-grey surfaces. The form was rare at Blaxton (Buckland and Dolby 1980, fig. 4, nos 42, 43) but apparently more common at Branton (Buckland 1976, 75, and fig. 4, nos 28–31). *Fill 1219 of ditch segment 1220, Enclosure F.*
29. Greyware. Jar. Sandy mid-grey ware with darker surfaces. Cf. some Type E jars at Blaxton (Buckland and Dolby 1980) rather than Branton (Buckland 1976). *Fill 1179 of ditch segment 1220, Enclosure F.*
30. Greyware. Jar. Sandy fabric with grey core, brown margins and very dark grey surfaces. Cf. remarks to no. 28, above. *Fill 1125 of ditch segment 1124, Enclosure F.*
31. Coarseware. Jar with stubby everted rim. Vesicular fabric, with common voids 1–7 mm, and sparse quartz and other non-soluble temper *c.* 1 mm. Coil built. Very dark grey exterior, lighter core, reddish brown interior. Carbonised deposits extant in the angle of the neck. Cf. Gregory 1996, fig. 20.3, no. 786, fig. 20.5, no. 826, from later first- and early second-century groups at Dragonby; Darling 1984, fig. 14, no. 2, from Lincoln legionary rampart. *Fill 1125 of ditch segment 1124, Enclosure F.*
32. See 'Mortaria'.
33. Greyware. Necked jar. Sandy very pale brown to 'off-white' fabric, with smoothed black surfaces. Quite worn. The fabric, which is also that of nos 35 and 41, is common in the Flavian to Antonine period in the Humber basin, commonly used for carinated jar forms. *Fill 1771 of ditch segment 1770, Enclosure F.*
34. Greyware. Jar. Sandy, pinkish brown fabric with original grey surfaces almost completely eroded. *Fill 1098 of ditch segment 109, Enclosure F.*
35. Greyware. Large bowl with internally and externally thickened rim. Soft, powdery light grey fabric. Worn. *Fill 305 of ditch segment 304, Enclosure F.*
36. Greyware. Wide-mouthed jar or bowl with outbent rim, grooved at the perimeter. Fabric as nos 32 and 41. No close parallel for this vessel can be offered, though a variety of jar and bowl forms with horizontally everted rims is common in the Flavian to Antonine period in the Humber basin and the fabric would also be consistent with an Antonine date. *Fill 305 of ditch segment 304, Enclosure F.*
37. Greyware. Jar with groove on top of rim. Sandy blue-grey Cantley-type fabric. *Fill 305 of ditch segment 304, Enclosure F.*



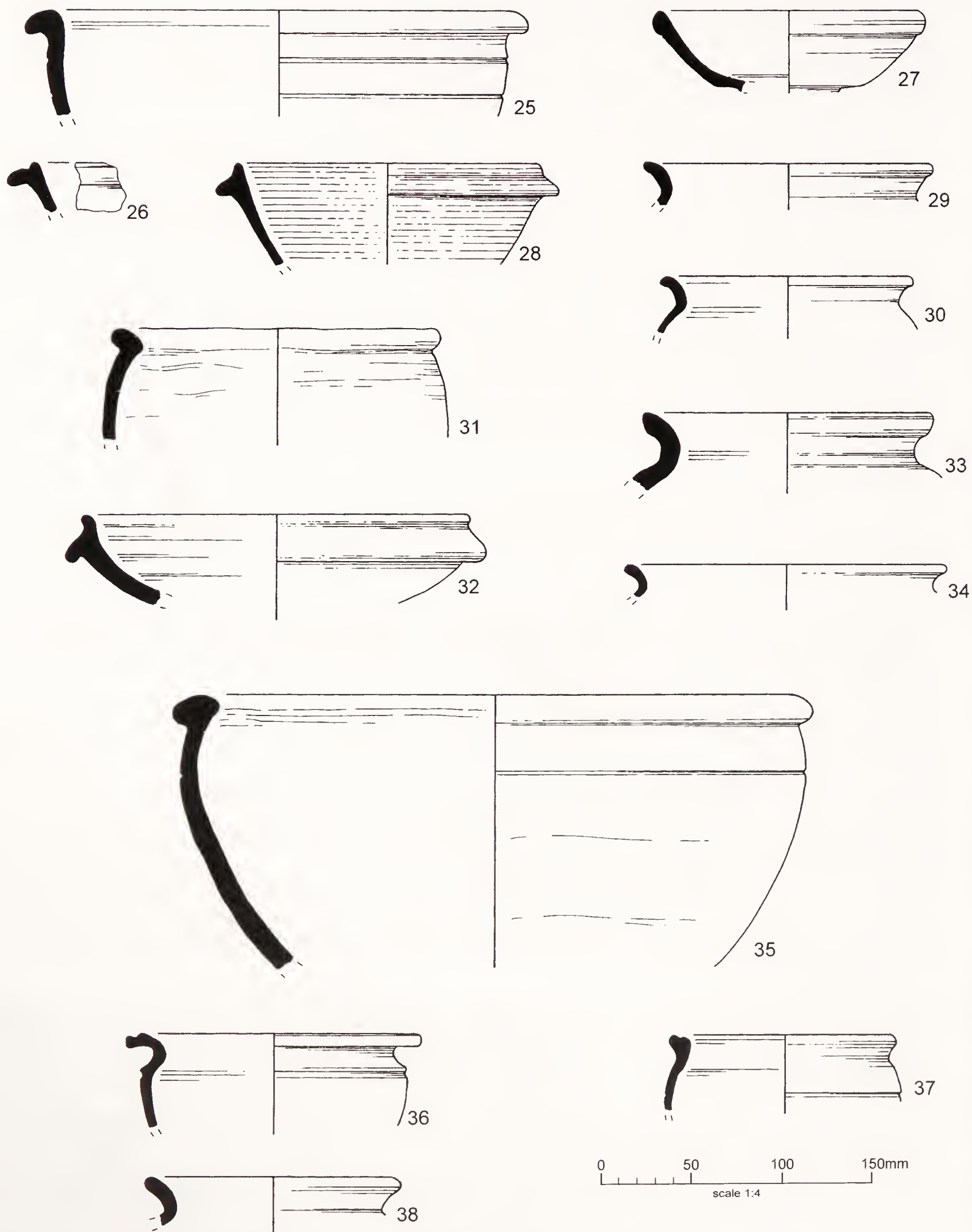


Fig. 24. Phase III vessels 25-38

38. Greyware. Jar. Sandy mid-grey ware with brown margins and dark brownish grey surfaces. Externally sooted. Worn. *Fill 305 of ditch segment 304, Enclosure F.*

*Phase IV*

39. Greyware. Large bowl. *Fill 1022 of ditch segment 1021, Enclosure F.*
40. Greyware. Small necked and shouldered bowl. Sandy blue-grey fabric with worn brown surfaces. *Fill 1022 of ditch segment 1021, Enclosure F.*
41. Greyware. Jar. Grey core, pale brown margins, remains of very dark grey surfaces. *Fill 1491 of segment 1490, gully 1418.*
42. Greyware. Dish/bowl with reeded rim. Fabric/ware as no. 32, *q.v.* The *floruit* of the reeded rim bowl *sensu stricto* is probably Neronian to Trajanic (Darling and Jones 1988, 27) though derivatives and dish variants seem to continue into the mid-Antonine period. Within South Yorkshire the form is recorded from Rossington Bridge, where it was unstratified, and Cantley, where it appears in the stokehole of Kiln 7 (Samuels 1983, fig. 121, no. 26; Annable 1960, Type 13), and also in Kiln's 33 *et seq.* It occurs as Form U at the Antonine kiln at Roxby, North Lincolnshire, the illustrated example being on the dish/bowl interface (Rigby and Stead 1976, fig. 68, no. 65). The form is used for colander/strainer in South Yorkshire into the fourth century (Buckland *et al.* 1987) *Fill 1522 of segment 1486, gully 1418.*
43. Greyware. Large bowl. Cf. no. 2. *Fill 1250 of segment 1249, and fill 1450 of segment 1449; both gully 1416.*
44. Greyware. Straight-sided flanged dish/bowl. Sandy brownish grey fabric, with worn very dark grey surfaces. *Fill 1159 of segment 1158, gully 1416.*
45. Greyware. Straight-sided flanged bowl. Sandy fabric, reddish-brown core, pale brown margins, very dark grey surfaces. 10mm pebble in fracture. *Fill 1450 of segment 1449, gully 1416.*
46. Greyware. Large bowl. Cf. Cregeen 1957, fig. 5, no. 175; Buckland 1976, fig. 7, 100. *Fill 1450 of segment 1449, gully 1416.*
47. Black Burnished Ware. Jar. Rim fragment. Cf. perhaps Gillam 1970 Types 143–145, with an overall date-range of *c.* AD 180–300. *Fill 1450 of segment 1449, gully 1416.*
48. Greyware. Small necked jar. Fine sandy brown fabric, possibly originally with a dark grey exterior. *Fill 1240 of slot segment 1239, ditch 1414.*
49. Late Roman South Yorkshire Redware. Bowl. Samian form 31 derivative. Fabric as no. 19. Complete apart from a small hole in the base. A portion of the footring, amounting to *c.* 25% of the circuit, is flattened, either from wear or from deliberate cutting or rubbing down. *Fill 1182 of grave 1181, ditch 1409.*

*Phase II–IV*

50. Greyware. Jar rim fragment. Sandy blue-grey ware. Carbonised deposits on exterior. *Fill 1714 of posthole 1713, Group 1405.*
51. Oxidised ware. Small flanged globular bowl or cup. Pinkish orange sandy fabric. Abundant quartz *c.* 2 mm, and sparse to moderate other inclusions, including iron ore, to *c.* 2 mm. In form, it resembles some of the smaller high-flanged 'bead and flange' varieties of the East Midlands and Lincolnshire more closely than the hemispherical flanged bowls in the rest of this assemblage. Cf. examples from Messingham and Old Winteringham (Rigby and Stead 1976, fig. 73, and fig. 75, no. 34); and The Park, Lincoln (Darling 1977, fig. 4, no. 70). These forms have a long life, as the above examples show. *Fill 1713 of posthole 1714, Group 1405.*
52. Greyware. Jar rim fragment. Sandy dark brownish grey ware with orange margins. *Fill 1713 of posthole 1714, Group 1405.*
53. Greyware. Jar. Grey sandy fabric with very dark grey surfaces. *Fill 1833 of gully 1832, Group 1405.*
54. Oxidised ware. Necked jar. Sandy fabric with grey core and orange brown surfaces/margins. *Fill 1835 of pit 1834, Group 1405.*
55. Late Roman South Yorkshire Redware. Dish. Samian form 36 derivative. Fabric as no. 19. Large areas of the dark red slip survive. Approximately two thirds of the vessel is represented. *Fill 1704 of posthole/pit 1703, Group 1405; and layer 1465.*
56. Greyware. Straight-sided flanged bowl. Black sandy fabric. *Layer 1465.*
57. Oxidised ware. Base of (?) bowl. Sandy fabric, fully reduced in the thicker parts of the section, except for a light reddish brown exterior. The uppermost parts of the extant section are



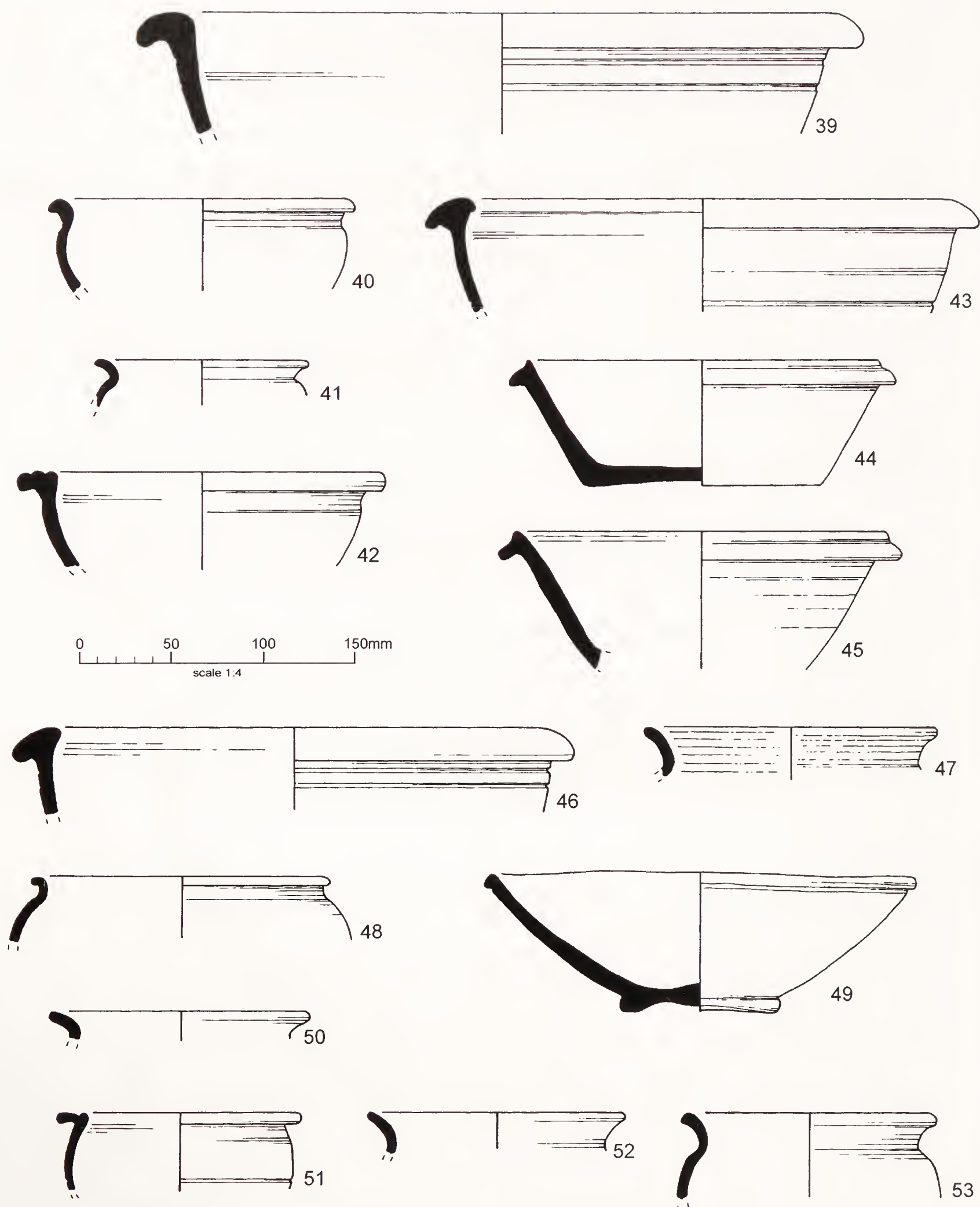


Fig. 25. Phase IV vessels 39-49, Phase II-IV vessels 50-53.

oxidised throughout. Possibly a variant of the Late Roman South Yorkshire Redware. *Layer 1465*.

58. Greyware. Large bowl. Fairly coarse grey fabric with orange surfaces and/or margins. Very worn. *Fill 1151 of pit 1149*.
59. Greyware. Large bowl. Sandy very dark grey ware, with brown margins and traces of original dark grey surfaces. Very abraded. *Layer 1173, overlying Enclosure F*.

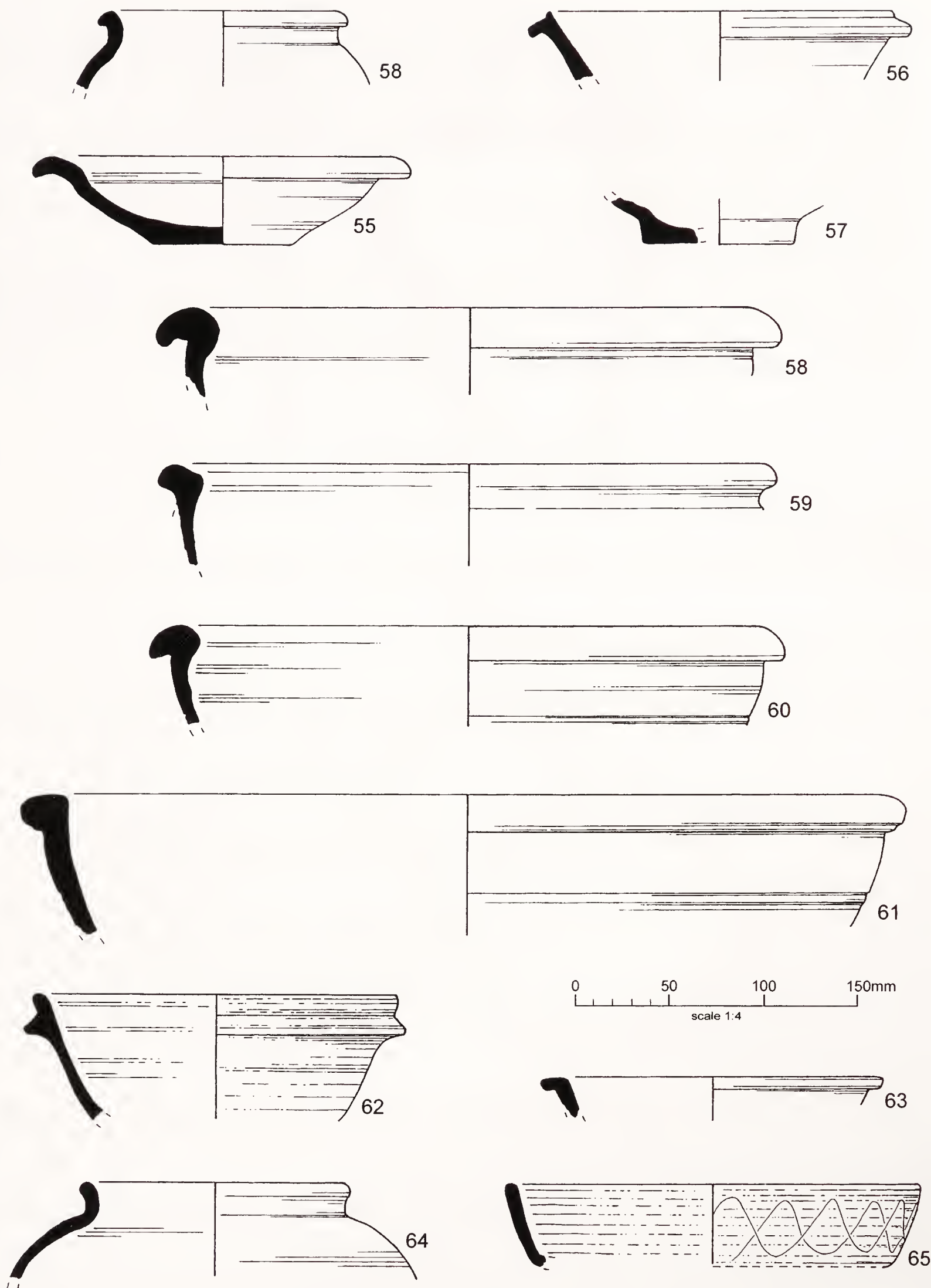


Fig. 26. Phase II–IV vessels 54–61, unphased vessels 62–65.

- 60. Greyware. Large bowl. Hard mid-grey ware with burnishing on top of rim and exterior. *Layer 1173*, overlying Enclosure F.
- 61. Greyware. Large bowl. Coarse dark grey fabric with reddish brown margins and remains of dark grey surfaces. *Layer 1173*, overlying Enclosure F, Phase II–IV.



*Unphased*

62. Greyware. Hemispherical flanged bowl. Wheel-burnished blue-grey ware. Hard, slightly coarse body with sparse quartz, chalk flecks and voids. Cf. remarks to no. 28. *Fill 1005 of feature 1004*.
63. Greyware. Lipped dish, the only example from the site. Dark grey sandy fabric. The form was made throughout most of the South Yorkshire production period, e.g. at Cantley, Blaxton and Branton. *Buried subsoil 1002*.
64. Greyware. Jar. Fairly fine light brownish grey fabric, with darker exterior. Single angular pebble inclusion, 4mm. *Topsoil 1000*.
65. Greyware. Dish. Dark grey sandy fabric with common angular quartz *c.* 0.5 mm and occasional chalk flecks. Brown margins and dark greyish brown surfaces, originally closely wheel-burnished but now very worn. Decoration of burnished intersecting running scroll. Probably a copy of a South-East Dorset BB1 form common in the late third and fourth century (Holbrook and Bidwell 1991, Type 59.3). *Topsoil 1000*.

## THE METAL FINDS

*Jane Cowgill*

## INTRODUCTION

Fourteen metal artefacts from ten different contexts were submitted for specialist analysis (Fig. 27).

## CATALOGUE IN CONTEXT ORDER

## Context 100 (topsoil)

Lead Weight: Conical, cast but external surfaces have rough irregular indentations perhaps formed during use. Diameter 24 mm, height 18 mm, weight 46 g.

## Context 301 (topsoil)

Lead waste: Blob. Weight 7 g.

## Context 1000 (topsoil)

Lead spindle whorl: Roughly shaped inverted cone, most of the original external surface is now missing. Maximum diameter 25 mm, height 10 mm, spindle hole diameter 10 mm.

## Context 1000 (topsoil)

Copper alloy and iron ?lid. (Metal-detected find.) Roman?: Incomplete cast circular ?lid with separately cast terminal on top that has a moulded collar. Traces of plating survive on some external surfaces. There are traces of a loop on one side which may have formed part of the hinge. The upper surface is decorated with a single concentric groove. A strip of iron (36 x 11 x 4 mm) is attached to the inside and this runs between two gaps in the cast sides. The loop is not centrally placed between these gaps. Diameter 34 mm, height of lid element 8 mm, total height 23 mm.

Although this object is very simple in form there is a terminal from the Lion Walk excavations in Colchester that is very similar in shape and size to the terminal attached to this ?lid (Crummy 1983, 164, fig. 201, cat no. 4604).

## Context 1102 (fill of field ditch 1101, Group 1156, Phase II–IV)

Iron strip: Fragment with no obvious perforations on X-ray 4020. Length 70 mm, width 22 mm, thickness 2 mm.

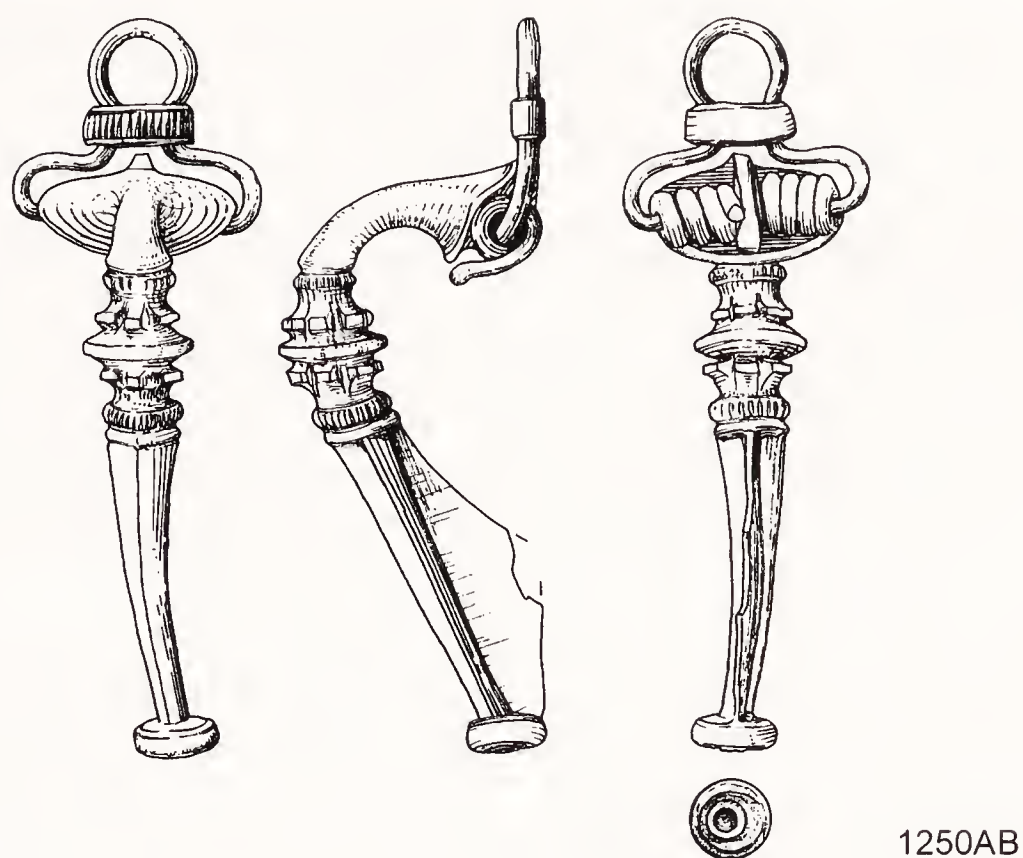
## Context 1102 (fill of field ditch 1101, Group 1156, Phase II–IV)

Iron object: Knife? Condition very poor and broken into three pieces. Length 83 mm, maximum width *c.* 17 mm, thickness?

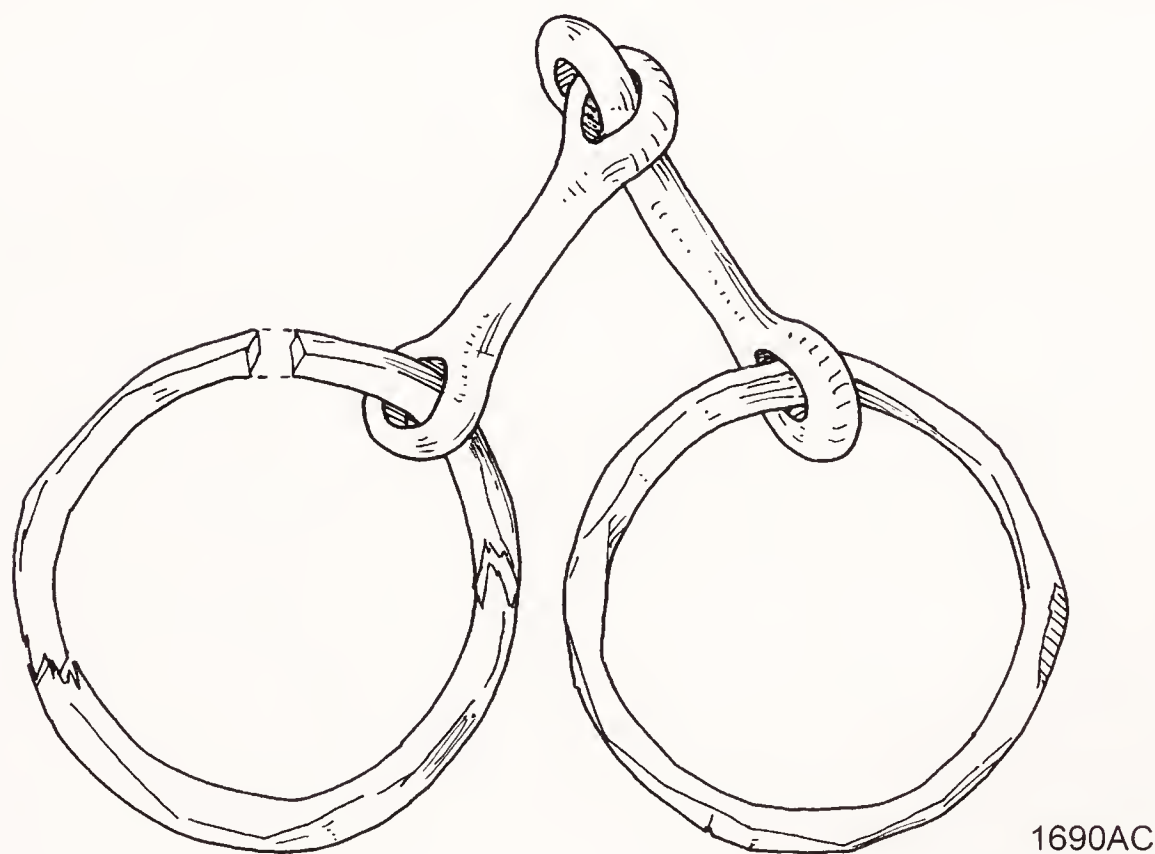
## Context 1160 (fill of ditch segment 1115, Enclosure F, Phase III)

Iron object: Tool? Very poor condition with an irregular outline on X-ray 4020. One end is less corroded than the rest — this can indicate the presence of a handle that has since corroded away. Length 76 mm, width *c.* 24 mm, thickness?

## Context 1182 (fill of grave 1181, Phase IV)



1250AB



1690AC

Fig. 27. Trumpet brooch (scale 1:1) and iron snaffle bit (scale 1:2).

Iron waste: Bar with possible chisel mark at one end. Length 38mm, width 12 mm, thickness 12 mm.

Context 1250 (fill of segment 1249, gully 1416, Phase IV)

Copper alloy trumpet brooch (Fig. 27). Romano-British, probably Flavian: Intact with an eight-coiled spring but the pin is missing. The detached wire head loop is held by a collar with wreath and groove decoration on the front face. The button consists of a thin central band with six raised pellets above and below (detail unclear due to corrosion products), the whole being framed by a groove above and a broad bead below. There is a prominent foot knob and the catch plate is solid but damaged. Length 58 mm.

This is an example of a common type of trumpet brooch that is encountered on sites on the eastern side of England from East Anglia into Scotland (Mackreth 1994, 166).

Context 1375 (fill of ditch segment 1374, Enclosure F, Phase III)



Iron latch pin: Tapering shaft with large diamond-shaped head. Incomplete length 86 mm. Head 21 mm x 15 mm x 10 mm.

Context 1450 (fill of segment 1449, gully 1416, Phase IV)

Iron nail possibly a hobnail: Object found in sample; not X-radiographed.

Context 1465 (layer, Phase II–IV)

Nail shank? Traces of mineral-preserved wood survive. Length 28 mm.

Context 1467 (fill of pit 1466, Phase II–IV)

Lead waste, Modern: Dribble with black ?paint covering most surfaces. Weight 9 g.

Context 1690 (fill of ditch terminal segment 1689, Enclosure F, Phase III)

Iron snaffle bit (Fig. 27). Late Iron Age /Roman: Two jointed links form the mouthpiece, each *c.* 75 mm long, with probably a circular section. Simple circular rings form the cheek-pieces, both *c.* 80 mm in diameter although one is slightly ovoid and appears on X-ray (4019) to be slightly thicker on the side opposite the mouthpiece. The cheek-pieces are an equi-sided diamond in section with the angles slightly ridged. Total length 265 mm.

Two-link snaffle bits are the commonest form found in the late Iron Age and in Roman-Britain, although the Iron Age examples tend to be slightly chunkier than the later examples (Manning 1985, 66–67, plates 28–29). Snaffle bits were used for riding and not for ordinary everyday traction and are therefore considered to be ‘high-status’ finds. Riding horses were the prerogative of the elite and military because of the cost of selecting and schooling the animals. They are also extremely unlikely to have been accidentally lost because of their size and it is therefore a surprising find from a small rural settlement that has produced a small finds assemblage.

## DISCUSSION

The three finds from the eastern enclosure ditch (F), are all made of iron, and consist of a ?tool from 1115, a latch pin from 1374 and perhaps most significantly the complete snaffle bit from one of the terminals of the ditch. The, now broken, ?tool and latch pin could be regarded as accidental losses or the discard of a broken object (both contain small amounts of iron that perhaps did not warrant sale for recycling), but the snaffle bit is complete, an object of some value and made by a skilled craftsman. Its find spot in the ditch terminal is perhaps no coincidence. Placed deposits, considered to have a symbolic meaning, are not uncommonly found in Late Iron Age and Romano-British ditch terminals and this snaffle bit needs to be considered as one such find. Its presence on what is thought to be a small rural, agricultural based settlement, that has produced an extremely small finds assemblage is remarkable in itself.

There are only two finds from Phase IV features, an iron ?offcut from grave 1181 and the trumpet brooch from gully 1416. The ?offcut is only a small piece of iron which may have become accidentally incorporated within the grave fill. The trumpet brooch, intact except for its pin, may have been someone’s sad loss. It is the only piece of jewellery found on the site. It is likely that the brooch was an heirloom and was lost/deposited possibly over a century after its probable Flavian date of manufacture.

The lead weight and copper alloy and iron lid could be Romano-British finds but the lead spindle whorl probably is not, most Roman examples being flat discs. Both the iron strip and ?knife from context 1102 are in such poor condition that they do not add to the interpretation of the site.

## CONCLUSIONS

Although the assemblage from the site is small it has some surprising elements. For a site so generally lacking in artefacts the presence of a trumpet brooch, admittedly a common Romano-British find, is not expected in this setting. Even more perplexing is the snaffle bit, in the ditch terminal, which is very suggestive of a symbolically ‘placed deposit’.

## THE COINS

*Richard Brickstock*

## INTRODUCTION

A total of six Roman coins from four contexts were recovered during excavation. They embrace a very narrow date bracket: three are 'radiates', i.e. '*antoniniani*' (double *denarii*), of the years AD 268–73, and the remaining three are 'radiate copies' of the years immediately following.

Radiate copies were produced in super-abundance to alleviate a shortage of small change in the 270s and early 280s. The three examples here happen to illustrate one or two of the more interesting aspects of this phenomenon:

## DISCUSSION

The consecration issues of Claudius II (died AD 270), bearing on the reverse either a lighted altar or an eagle, are some of the most commonly copied. Some are almost indistinguishable from their prototypes in both module and quality of production, while others may be both tiny and crude. In this assemblage we have two 'altar' copies (nos 1 and 3), as well as a worn, but regular (i.e. legitimate), fragment of the 'eagle' type of the deified Claudius II (no.4). The copies are both of fairly large module but virtually blank, in all probability as a result of poor striking (I have described them as 'not struck up'), perhaps due to a failure to heat the flans before striking.

A further radiate copy (no. 2) is completely blank (again 'not struck up') and of rather small module (10.5 mm), but the unusual thickness of the flan results in a coin not dissimilar in weight to nos 1 and 3. It is sometimes postulated, and I think plausibly, that such thick flans may have been cut from a long rod rather than punched out of sheet-metal.

Radiates of the middle and later years of the third century were of extremely low intrinsic value (and the copies virtually worthless), and, with inflation rife, they would have been needed in ever-increasing numbers to effect small day-to-day transactions. It is very likely that such coins were carried around by the bag or purse-full and that in many instances (given the often small and crude nature of the copies) they were used by the bag, i.e. in quantity, rather than as individual coins.

Coins nos 5 and 6 were found corroded together, and it has not been possible to part them. Even so, they are to some degree identifiable, both being regular Gallic Empire issues of Victorinus or of the Tetrici (AD 268–73). They may well represent the remains of a small purse hoard, particularly in the light of the conservator's observations:

During investigative cleaning of coins 5 and 6, areas of dark organic material, which appeared to have a slightly fibrous woody structure, were observed on the face of the larger coin. Possibly these two coins were in an organic bag or container when lost/buried, which could explain how they have remained in close enough proximity to become corroded together.

## CATALOGUE:

1. Context 305 (fill of ditch segment 302, Enclosure F, Phase III)  
Ruler: 'Claudius II, posth.' Denomination: 'Antoninianus'  
Obverse: [DIVO CLAVDIO] [radiate head, right]  
Reverse: [CONSECRATIO] Altar  
Date of issue: 270+ Mint: –  
Catalogue reference: c. of RIC 261  
Diameter: 18 mm Weight: 1.7 g



- Condition: NSU/NSU Die axis: ?  
(Reverse type only very faintly visible and obverse not at all: probably not struck up properly, rather than worn away.)
2. Context 1173 (layer overlying Enclosure F, Phase II–IV)  
Ruler: Radiate copy Denomination: 'Antoninianus'  
Obverse: –  
Reverse: –  
Date of issue: 273+ Mint: –  
Catalogue reference: c. as RIC -  
Diameter: 10.5 mm Weight: 1.4 g  
Condition: NSU/NSU Die axis: ?  
(Types invisible; possibly always blank; very thick flan, c. 3.5mm, perhaps cut from a rod.)
  3. Context 1173 (layer overlying Enclosure F, Phase II–IV)  
Ruler: 'Claudius II, posth.' Denomination: 'Antoninianus'  
Obverse: [DIVO CLAVDIO] [radiate head, right]  
Reverse: [CONSECRATIO] Altar  
Date of issue: 270+ Mint: –  
Catalogue reference: c. of RIC 261  
Diameter: 17 mm Weight: 1.6 g  
Condition: NSU/NSU Die axis: ?  
(Obverse blank; trace of altar type on reverse; again, probably not struck up rather than worn flat.)
  4. Context 1343 (fill of ditch segment 1342, Enclosure F, Phase III)  
Ruler: Claudius II, posth. Denomination: 'Antoninianus'  
Obverse: [DIVO CLAVDIO] radiate head, right  
Reverse: [CONSECRATIO] Eagle  
Date of issue: 270+ Mint: –  
Catalogue reference: RIC 266  
Diameter: 14.5 mm Weight: 0.7 g  
Condition: W/W Die axis: 6  
(This is a fragment of a regular issue.)
  5. Context 1375 AC (Coin 1 of 2) (fill of ditch segment 1374, Enclosure F, Phase III)  
Ruler: Tetricus I/II Denomination: 'Antoninianus'  
Obverse: (obscured by coin 2)  
Reverse: [SPE]S AVGG  
Date of issue: 270–73 Mint: –  
Catalogue reference: as RIC 132  
Diameter: 21 mm Weight: –  
Condition: -/SW Die axis: ?
  6. Context 1375 AC (Coin 2 of 2) (fill of ditch segment 1374, Enclosure F, Phase III)  
Ruler: Victorinus/Tetricus I Denomination: 'Antoninianus'  
Obverse: [IMP. . . . . PF] AVG  
Reverse: (obscured by coin 1)  
Date of issue: 268–73 Mint: –  
Catalogue reference: RIC –  
Diameter: 19 mm Weight: –  
Condition: ?SW/- Die axis: ?  
(Nos 5 and 6 are both regular issues, found corroded together, and weighing 4.7 g in combination.)

## CATALOGUING CONVENTIONS:

### Denominations:

'Antoninianus' = a modern name for the double *denarius*

A copy or counterfeit of a particular ruler or issuer is denoted by single quotation marks, e.g. 'CLAUDIUS II', and by the use of a lower case 'c' in the catalogue reference, e.g. c. of 261 = a copy of RIC 261. The use of the word 'of' indicates that a precise catalogue reference has been obtained; for both official issues and copies, 'as' is used to denote an incompletely catalogued coin.

Catalogue references are to RIC (Burnett *et al.* 1926–1994)

Flan diameter is given in millimetres (mm); and weight in grams (g). Die axis is recorded according to the hours of the clock. Condition of the obverse and reverse is denoted by the following abbreviations:

UW	Unworn
SW	Slightly worn
W	Worn
VW	Very worn
EW	Extremely worn
C	Corroded
NSU	Not struck up

## THE SLAGS

*Jane Cowgill*

### INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

A total of 1.250 g of hand excavated slag and associated materials was submitted for recording (total of 36 pieces) with an additional 57 g and 14 pieces of slag from the samples; see Catalogue below. The slag was cleaned when necessary with a toothbrush, dried and identified solely on morphological grounds by visual examination, sometimes with the aid of a x10 binocular microscope.

### DISCUSSION

Two main types of slag are present, both probably generated by completely different processes. There are three pieces (from contexts 1027, 1116 and 1469) that were produced during iron smithing, the forging of iron objects or the recycling of iron, all of which are plano-convex slag accumulations (more commonly known as hearth bottoms). They are all very abraded, probably through weathering, and that from context 1469 is unusually brittle and fractures easily perhaps due to a post-depositional factor that has severely effected the slags composition (fayalite:  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O} \cdot \text{SiO}_2$ ). Only a small amount of crushed plate hammerscale was identified amongst the soil in the bags containing the slag (in all probably no more than 2 g of soil from context 1116). A large quantity, however, was recovered from the 10 litre sample from Phase I posthole 1316 (fill 1317). The 49 g of magnetic material extracted from the residue is composed, virtually in its entirety, of large fresh pieces of plate hammerscale, with some spheroids and prills. The condition and size of the pieces clearly indicate that this is a primary deposit directly from the floor of a smithy, and it is likely that the smithing was occurring close to the posthole. Small amounts of hammerscale and smithing slag (most small light pieces of prill) were found in most of the sample residues but in the very low quantities of just 1 to 7 pieces. Hammerscale can be dispersed by wind, which probably accounts for most of these pieces, and small pieces of hammerscale can move down through the soil. To state the obvious, however, for dispersal by wind, large quantities need to be present on exposed ground and this wide spread distribution may suggest that iron smithing may have been a more constant activity at the site than the slag would suggest.



The three pieces of smithing slag, admittedly a very small quantity, were found widely dispersed across the site, two in Phase II contexts with the third (context 1469) from Phase III. Their abraded appearance would suggest that they had been exposed to extended surface weathering on the ground before being deposited in the ditches/slot. The extremely small size of the group is surprising considering the quantity of hammerscale, also, none of the smithing slag is from a Phase I feature. The abraded and brittle slag from Phase II feature 1469 is close to the posthole containing the hammerscale and perhaps is reworked from that episode. It is difficult to ascertain the longevity of the smithing activity. Small quantities of hammerscale and slag prills were found in environmental samples of all phases and although some of this may be redeposited there must have been a mechanism for wide spread dispersal across the site for this to have occurred.

The second and much more problematic group of slags are those recorded as 'Iron Age Grey' (Swiss and McDonnell 2001). Consistent with all slags of this type these pieces are cream to a mid-grey in colour, light, very vesicular, have evidently been molten and flowed and have a glassy grainy structure. Although brittle and easily crushed, some pieces are still quite large (80 x 80 x 50 mm for example), and are much too big and consistently grey in colour to be classified as ordinary fuel ash slags. This type of slag has so far been exclusively found on Late Iron Age sites, often farmsteads and commonly in association with domestic rubbish (Cowgill, Mach and McDonnell 2001). Unfortunately all analytical attempts have failed so far to identify how it was produced, and why it is consistently only generated during the Late Iron Age. It is found on sites of all soil types and this does not appear to be a factor influencing its production.

The 'Iron Age Grey' slags were all found close together in the northern ditch section of Phase II western enclosure D (contexts 1184, 1377 and possibly the small fragment from 1146). The only pieces from the environmental samples were also from context 1184, which interestingly produced no hammerscale). The sole dating evidence for this enclosure is currently a single sherd of second-century AD pottery. If this slag is contemporary with this sherd it would be the first example of this slag type from a Romano-British context, suggesting continued metal working techniques from the Late Iron Age into the Romano-British period on rural native farmsteads. An alternative explanation would be that it was redeposited from the north-western corner of Phase I ditch 1415 (Enclosure B) below or a feature associated with it and that there was a Late Iron Age predecessor to the Romano-British occupation. No slags are firmly datable but this particular type is the closest that we have to one.

## FLINT

*Peter Makey*

The flint assemblage totalled three struck pieces that had a collective weight of 4.1 g. They comprised an edge retouched flake from the topsoil, an edge retouched bladelet from context 1375 (fill of ditch segment 1374, Enclosure D, Phase II) and an edge utilised flake from context 1788 (fill of ditch segment 1787, Enclosure D, Phase II). No certain date can be placed on any of the lithic material.

## THE WORKED STONE

*Elizabeth Wright*

### INTRODUCTION

Three fragments of quern and one broken whetstone were submitted for full analysis from excavations at Billingley Drive, Thurnscoe (Fig. 28).

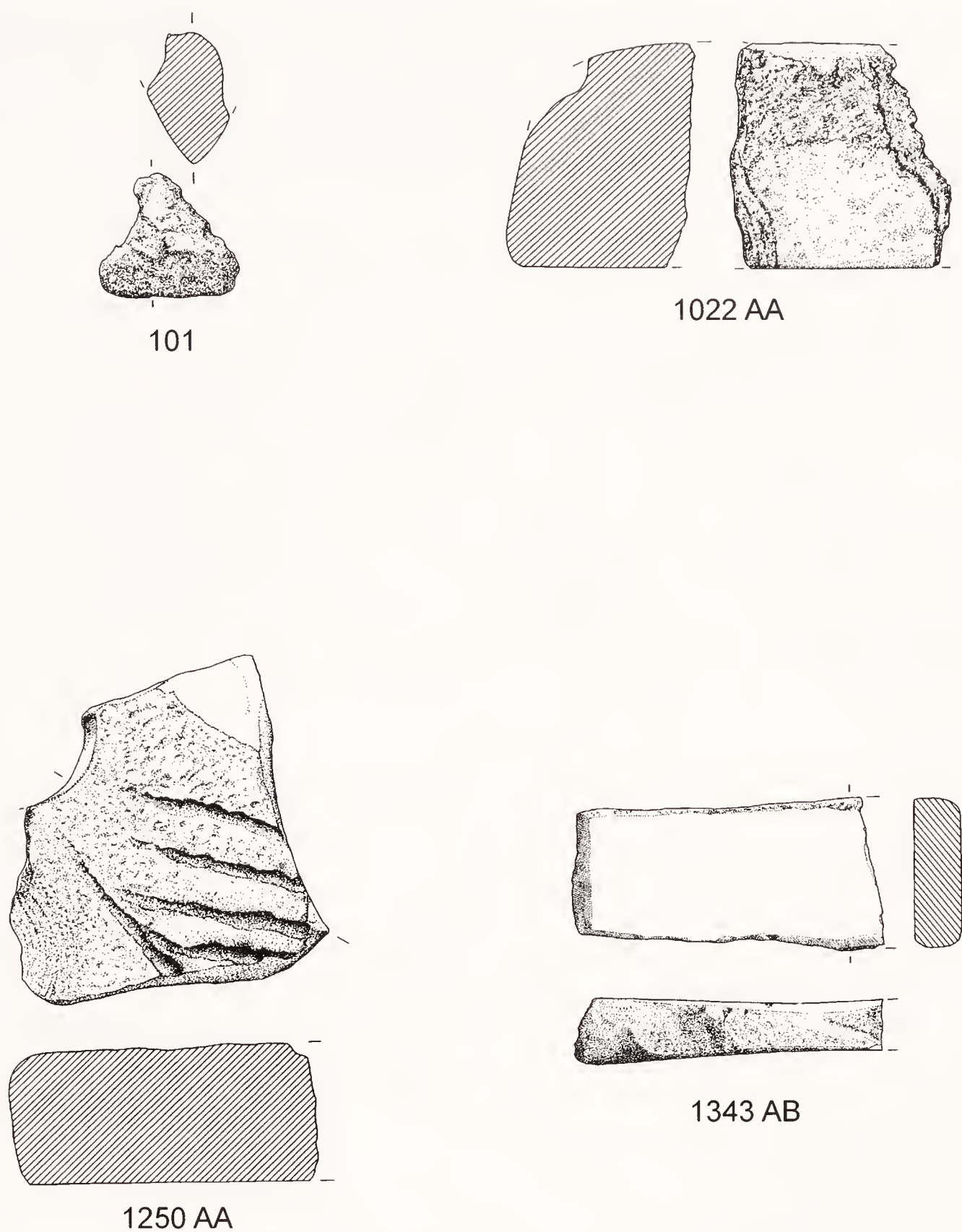


Fig. 28. The worked stone (scale 1:4).

DESCRIPTION

Quern 1: 1250 (fill of segment 1249, gully 1416, Phase IV)

A stone fragment measuring 130 x 125 x 60 mm overall of medium grained, well sorted, feldspathic Millstone Grit. The rock is very well cemented and shows some bedding features. The artefact is blackened and reddened from exposure to fire or heat. This stone fragment derives from a flat quern stone of Roman type, and exhibits part of the central perforation or 'eye'. The thickness of the quern increases from about 55 mm at the eye to about 60 mm where broken. The circumference is missing. It is not possible to estimate the diameter of the quern, but it appears to have been a substantial one, perhaps of about 500 to 600 mm diameter, or even more, and of a good weight. The quern stone appears to have been utilised as both an upper stone and a lower one at different times as both surfaces show a wear polish consistent with grinding.



One surface of the quern shows part of an incised pattern of grooves in characteristic 'harps', with the grooves set at about 20 mm intervals. A faint marking groove defines the extent of the harp. The opposite face is worn smooth and shows no signs of grooving, though possible traces of peck dressing remain. A deposit of iron adheres patchily to this surface. What remains of the central eye is cylindrical and well-fashioned, probably about 70 mm in diameter.

Iron deposits are not uncommonly found on the smooth grinding faces of Roman querns from this region. Many of the Millstone Grits and Coal Measures sandstones from which they were manufactured contain iron in the form of goethite and limonite. It is possible that some of the surface iron deposits formed on the querns in their depositional environment, particularly if this was waterlogged, in the course of almost 2000 years of burial, perhaps as a result of translocation of iron within the artefact itself or of iron deposited from local groundwater. However, many broken querns and their fragments, particularly in the Roman period, were re-used in contexts of metal-working or metal tool sharpening. Iron deposits resulting from this use are not out of the question.

It was not unusual during the Roman period for millstones and querns to be re-used as both the upper and lower stones of a pair. Breakage of the often more delicate and mobile 'runner' or upper stone was particularly common. The re-use of a suitable stone, even if not ideal, must reflect the 'expense' and difficulty of obtaining replacement stones. As the stones function most efficiently as a matched pair, obtaining a replacement stone of a matching size may have been problematical.

This quern stone appears to have been well manufactured and probably derived from a quarry in the area of the south Pennines. A large quern quarry operating in the Iron Age and Roman periods is known at Wharncliffe near Deepcar in South Yorkshire. This stone appears to have too high a feldspar content to be a product of that quarry. A smaller quarry with evidence of quern production in the Iron Age and Roman periods is known in the Rivelin valley near Sheffield and might have constituted a suitable source, though there must have been many smaller quarries operating within this same area, a few of which are known, but many of which are undiscovered, lost or destroyed.

Although quern 1 was damaged in such a way that its diameter could not be realistically estimated, its substantial nature could perhaps suggest a stone large enough to be classed as a small millstone rather than a hand quern.

#### Quern 2: 1022AA (fill of ditch segment 1021, Enclosure F, Phase III)

A quern fragment 80 x 90 x 95 mm overall. The quern is of poorly sorted, medium to coarse-grained, feldspathic Millstone Grit of a pinkish-buff colour and containing some limonite. The piece, which is badly damaged, is an edge fragment with some worn grinding surface, some of the parallel opposite surface and part of the edge remaining. A suggested diameter for the stone is between 360 and 400 mm with a height of 93 mm. Because only small areas of the original quern surface remain on this fragment, it is not possible to be entirely certain whether this is an upper or lower stone, though, on balance, it is likely to be part of an upper stone. The stone is relatively small and thick with a curving profile to the edge and a flat grinding surface. All these features are suggestive of the type of beehive quern used in this region during the late Iron Age and into the Roman period. However, the estimated diameter for this quern and its remaining height both lie at the extreme edge of the ranges of diameter and thickness for beehive querns and it is much more likely that the quern belongs to a regional group of early types of post-Conquest quern apparently transitional between native beehive querns and the styles imported from the Roman empire. The latter are in general both of larger diameter and thinner and normally exhibit inclined grinding surfaces. The 'transitional' querns can be



larger and thinner than the preceding beehive querns but often retain the flat grinding surface and curved edge profile seen in the beehive type. They may also retain other features such as the funnel or cup-shaped hopper and feed-pipe and the drilled hole in the side of the stone for a horizontal handle. This type of quern is not unusual in this area and a number of examples can be cited in local museums collections, such as those at Doncaster and Sheffield and in collections from the Trent valley.

The grinding surface of this quern is flat and worn with an especially well-polished area around the edge of the grinding surface. It retains no signs of dressing, but would almost certainly have been peck dressed rather than grooved. The outer edge is neatly peck dressed and curves gently inwards towards the upper? surface, which is pecked flat and slightly smoothed. If this were an upper stone as suggested, then there was probably a wide flat edge surrounding a bowl shaped (or occasionally cone-shaped) hopper, narrowing to a circular drilled feed-pipe leading to the grinding surface.

Querns are an artefact with the potential for a very long life. When broken or discarded they can be put to a multitude of secondary uses, almost indefinitely. Well-dated examples in primary context are quite rare. It is the early stylistic features of this example, which lead to the suggestion that it is of early date, perhaps late first century AD to early second century AD. The quern's style would probably have appealed to native taste, but such querns can be found in military or urban contexts alongside more 'Romanised' forms.

### Quern 3: 101 (topsoil)

A fragment of grey, vesicular lava with many dark phenocrysts (probably augite) and a few white phenocrysts. The piece measures 60 x 50 x 37 mm overall. It has two worn slightly 'polished' surfaces, though these retain a rough texture, which is a function of the wear characteristics of the raw material. The worn surfaces meet along a straight edge at an angle of approximately 70 degrees.

The fragment is probably of andesite lava from the large quarry at Mayen in the Eifel of Germany (also sometimes called Neidermendig or Andernach lava). The quarry was exploited for the production of querns, grinding stones and mortars from the Neolithic to Medieval periods and large millstones were manufactured there into more recent times. The Mayen quarry produced large numbers of hand querns and millstones during the Roman period and many of these were exported to Britain. They were particularly popular with the Roman military as they were light in weight because of the porous texture of the rock and this made them easier to transport when on campaign. Cereals formed an important part of the Roman military diet and processing equipment was essential. Whilst other sources of suitable lava existed at this period, for example in France at the Volvic quarry, most British examples which have been examined in thin section seem to derive from the Mayen quarry. Whilst this lava fragment appears somewhat less vesicular than most, there is little reason to doubt that it originates in the Mayen quarry.

The fragment almost certainly derives from a quern stone but appears to be a secondary product, having been utilised as part of a rubbing stone having at least two worn faces meeting at an angle. It may have been used in food processing or perhaps some other domestic or industrial function. It is not necessary for a complete lava quern ever to have been on the settlement at Thurnscoe, and it is much more likely that this fragment derives from a lava quern broken elsewhere. The rubber could have been fashioned on site from an imported broken piece or else brought in as a rubbing tool manufactured elsewhere. Some care would appear to have been used in shaping the straight edge, which is unlikely to have occurred by chance.

In Northern Britain, lava querns appear most frequently on military sites and higher status sites, e.g. Roman villas. They are particularly rare on smaller native settlements,



though occasionally small fragments such as this one appear, possibly suggesting a casual trade in broken pieces. In this region numbers of lava querns are known from Roman Doncaster, the Templebrough Roman fort at Rotherham and Rossington Bridge and it is possible that one of these places was the source of the Thurnscoe fragment.

Whetstone: 1343 AB (fill of ditch segment 1342, Enclosure F, Phase III)

This artefact constitutes part of a broken whetstone measuring 135 x 62 x 23 mm overall. The rock is a very fine, well-sorted, yellow-grey, micaceous sandstone, probably from the Coal Measures. Bedding layers run parallel to the two larger surfaces. There appear to be some tiny, superficial flakes of iron on some surfaces, probably as a result of depositional factors, context or environment.

The artefact is broken longitudinally at its wider end, probably in recent times, but was probably also damaged and broken in antiquity. It shows few signs of very careful shaping, but considerable wear on the two larger, trapezoidal-shaped flat surfaces. The longitudinal, narrow edges orthogonal to these surfaces also show some, but lesser, wear polish. The whetstone had been carefully chosen for its properties, the fine and even grain size of the raw material and the parallel bedding planes in the rock being particularly suited to its intended use. It is possible that some initial shaping or preparation was carried out, but if so, this is no longer clear as a result of damage and use-wear.

## DISCUSSION

The two millstone grit quern fragments represent more than a single pair of quern stones since they derive from two different types and sizes of stone. Querns of similar types are known from other native settlements in this region. Two quern fragments are very few from a site whose occupation may have extended from the second to fourth centuries. It is possible that truncation of features on site had already removed quern fragments from the excavated area, as large stone fragments ploughed up tend to be removed to field edges. Alternatively, further quern fragments may have been disposed of in antiquity away from the excavated area. Another conclusion might be that cereal processing did not form an important part of the settlement's economy. This seems unlikely, given the discovery of corn drying ovens on site and the carbonised cereal grains found. Whether corn driers were used to parch grain before grinding, when it becomes easier to mill, or for malting grains is not clear and further research is required to establish the connections between querns and millstones, corn driers, economy and diet. The fragment of lava quern does not necessarily indicate a complete lava quern had ever been on the settlement. It is more likely that part of a broken lava quern had been imported into the site as a secondary product, and was subsequently utilised as a rubbing stone, of which this is a fragment. Whilst the whetstone could derive from very close to the settlement, the querns were of Millstone Grit and likely to have come from quarries which have been shown to exist at this period on the Namurian rocks of the South-east Pennines. It is likely that water transport was an important factor in the movement of these very weighty objects at this time, so that they are very likely to have reached the settlement via the rivers Don or Dearne.

## ANIMAL BONE

*Louisa Gidney*

## INTRODUCTION

Eight contexts produced a very small collection of stratified animal bone, 3 fragments of bone and 50 fragments of animal tooth. Preservation of the animal bones is extremely

poor, bones and teeth from juvenile animals or small mammals and birds are unlikely to have survived within the archaeological record.

Context 304 (fill of ditch segment 304, Enclosure F, Phase III)

12 enamel fragments from cattle or possibly horse tooth

Context 309 (fill of ditch segment 308, Enclosure D, Phase II)

1 cattle maxillary tooth

Context 506 (fill of ditch segment 504, Enclosure D, Phase II)

25 parts of several cattle maxillary teeth

Context 1116 (fill of ditch segment 1115, Enclosure E, Phase II)

1 horse calcaneum

Context 1142 (fill of ditch segment 1110, Enclosure E, Phase II)

5 horse tooth fragments

Context 1184 (fill of ditch segment 1145, Enclosure D, Phase II)

3 horse tooth fragments

Context 1487 (fill of ditch segment 1376, Enclosure D, Phase II)

4 tooth fragments, probably cattle

## DISCUSSION

An insufficient quantity of animal bone was recovered due to the poor conditions for survival within the archaeological record. However, it is very interesting that in such a tiny assemblage four of the nine contexts contain recognisable elements of horse. One would expect cattle to be notably more abundant than horse.

## ENVIRONMENTAL ARCHAEOLOGY REPORT

*James Rackham*

### INTRODUCTION

A large number of environmental samples were taken from excavated sections across the site. These included samples taken for bulk environmental, phosphate and radiocarbon analysis. Only the results from the bulk sample and three radiocarbon samples are discussed in this report. The samples were assessed and a report produced with proposals for post-excavation analysis (Rackham 2000). Detailed analyses were undertaken and reported in an archive report (Rackham *et al.* 2001) from which this text has been constructed.

The sampling policy was as follows. Bulk environmental samples were collected from all discrete large features. The sample sizes were variable, and depended upon context size in many cases, with a general policy of sampling ditch and pit fills with three tubs (20–30 litres) for environmental analysis while as much soil as possible was taken from smaller features. Ten litre samples were taken from discrete lenses in ditch or feature fills. A total of 176 postholes were excavated and 36 of these, to give an even coverage across the site and the different phases, were sampled. These were generally two litre samples, except where charred material was obvious and a larger sample was collected. In total 100 samples were processed for environmental analysis from 91 different contexts (Table 3).

The processing methods are detailed in the assessment report (Rackham 2000). The frequency of hammer scale and the density of charred cereal grain in each sample was recorded and the individual components of all the processed samples were preliminarily identified prior to the selection of samples for more detailed post-excavation analysis.

These data collected during the assessment have been used to address the spatial distribution of material across the site. The data is unfortunately limited both by the



TABLE 3: Billingley Drive, Thurnscoe. Summary of the finds from the processed samples  
(coal is present as small fragments in almost all the samples; \* indicates samples studied in detail for charred plant remains)

Finds code	Context no.	Sample vol. in l.	Feature	Residue vol. in l.	Pot £/#	Brick/ tile wt g.	Fired earth/ daub g	Fire- crack'd pebble	Metal Slag	Ham'er scale no.	Glass no.	Bone wt g.	Phase
AA	1024	29	boundary ditch 1023	6.75					+	5			I
AA*	1248	6	enclosure ditch 1247	2									I
AA	1254	7	ditch terminal 1253	2.25	5/<1				+	1	1		I
AA*	1365	30	ditch 1364	5					+	?		<1	I
AA	1433	2.5	post-hole 1432	0.125					+				I
AA	1437	2.75	post-hole 1436	0.25					+	1			I
AA	1556	25	ditch 1555	6.5					+	4			I
AA*	1583	2.25	post-hole 1582	0.25					+				I
AA	1614	3	post-hole 1613	0.15					+				I
AA	1616	2.75	post-hole 1615	0.175					+				I
AA	1628	2.75	post-hole 1627	0.4									I
AA*	1664	2	beam slot 1665	0.2			6						I
AA*	1702	8	gully 1701	2					+	2		<1	I
AA*	1778	10	slot 1776	0.4								2	I
AA*	1028	23	droveway ditch 1025	3.75						7		<1	II
AA*	1050	31	droveway ditch 1049	4					+	2		<1	II
AA	1178	10	enclosure ditch 1176	1.2	3/1				+	4		2	II
AA	1184	11	boundary ditch 1145	1.5					8			<1	II
AA	1234	10.5	enclosure ditch 1185	3.25					+				II
AA	1236	10	enclosure ditch 1185	1.9					+				II
AA	1264	22	enclosure ditch 1262	5.5					+			<1	II
AA	1539	23	enclosure ditch 1366	9.5					+			<1	II
AA	1667	28	enclosure ditch 1666	4.5					+	5		<1	II
AA	1692	10	encl. ditch term. 1691	1.6	1/<1				+	4		<1	II
AA	1820	30	possible grave 1819	12.5					+			<1	II
AA	1822	30	possible grave 1821	9.25				352	+	4		<1	II
*	206♣	?	corn drying oven 1100	?								<1	I
*	207♣	?	corn drying oven 1100	?									I
AA*	1086	30	corn drying oven 1100	3					+	1			I
AA*	1093	3	corn drying oven 1100	0.1									I
AA*	1094	17	corn drying oven 1100	2.25		11\$				1		<1	I
AA	1125	25	enclosure ditch 1124	7.75	4/55			339	+	1			III
AA*	1378	24	enclosure ditch 1342	8	6/61				+	2			III
AA	1504	25	enclosure ditch 1497	9					+				III
AA	1690	14	encl. ditch term. 1689	2.6					+	1		<1	III

AB*	1690	2.5	encl. ditch term.	1689		0.4			III
AA*	1643	21	field ditch	1604		3		I	< I II-IV
AA*	1704	10	post-hole/pit	1703	26/2	2			II-IV
AA*	1708	2.5	post-hole	1707		0.25			II-IV
AA	1710	2.25	post-hole	1709		0.4			II-IV
AA	1712	1.25	post-hole	1711		0.3			II-IV
AA	1722	2.75	post-hole	1721		0.5			II-IV
AA*	1740	2.5	post-hole	1739		0.25			II-IV
AA*	1742	4.75	post-hole	1741		0.72			II-IV
AA	1751	2.75	post-hole	1750		0.2			II-IV
AA	1785	4.75	post-hole	1784		0.9			II-IV
AB*	1788	10	encl. ditch term.	1787		0.4		I	II-IV
AA	1794	2.25	post-hole	1793		0.25		2	II-IV
AA	1798	4.75	post-hole	1797		0.85			II-IV
AA	1802	2.5	post-hole	1801		0.3 <sup>25</sup>		2	II-IV
AA	1854	1.75	post-hole	1853		0.5			II-IV
AA	1858	2.5	post-hole	1857		0.7			II-IV
AA	1882	1.5	post-hole	1881		0.3		2	II-IV
AA	1888	4.5	post-hole	1887		1.2			II-IV
AA	1896	4	post-hole	1895		1.2		I	II-IV
AA	1045	20	pit	1044		6.5	1 / < 1	7	II-IV
AC	1331	30	grave	1332		5		2	III-IV
AA*	1336	30	ditch	1333		6.25		I	III-IV
AC	1380	8	grave	1379		3.25			III-IV
AA	1558	30	grave	1557		8.5		I	III-IV
AA*	1062	15	hearth	1003		1		I	IV
AA*	1064	28	hearth	1003		1.3		2	IV
AA*	1610	15	hearth	1003		1.7		3	IV
AA*	1135	6	oven/kiln	1134		1	Cu	I	IV
AB	1135	1.25	oven/kiln	1134		1			IV
AD	1135	1.75	oven/kiln	1134		0.02			IV
AA*	1154	12	oven/kiln	1134		0.9			IV
AC*	1154	5	oven/kiln	1134		0.1			IV
AB*	1182	19	grave	1181		5		I?	IV
AA*	1240	30	curvilinear slot	1239		10		I	IV
AA	1272	7.5	grave	1271		2.5	3? / < 1		IV
AA*	1443	1	post-hole	1442		0.12			IV
AA*	1450	10	slot	1449		1.5	3/8		IV
AB*	1450	9	slot	1449		1.8	14/32		IV
AC*	1450	7	slot	1449		1.2	5/12		IV
AD*	1450	9	slot	1449		1.75	nail? 5/7	I	IV
AΕ*	1450	9	slot	1449		1.8	4 / < 1	5	IV



Finds code	Context no.	Sample vol. in l.	Feature	Residue vol. in l.	Pot £/#	Brick/ tile wt g.	Fired earth/ daub g	Fire- crack'd pebble	Metal	Slag	Ham' er scale no.	Glass no.	Bone wt g.	Phase
AF*	1450	10	slot 1449	1.6	3/6					+			<1	IV
AA	1522	6	ditch 1486	1	4/6					+			<1	IV
AA	1548	20	ditch 1486	1.7				115		+	2			IV
AA	1112	30	gully 1087	12	1/<1					+	7	1	<1	Unph
AA*	1150	16	pit 1149	4										Unph
AA	1201	30	beam slot 1200	4.5	1/<1		125			1	2	1	<1	Unph
AA	1309	3.25	post-hole 1308	0.95			49			+				Unph
AB	1317	10	post-hole 1316	1.2	1/3					+	+	+		Unph
AA	1321	2.5	post-hole 1320	0.7										Unph
AA	1345	2.5	post-hole 1344	0.4						+				Unph
AA	1351	2.75	post-hole 1350	0.25						+				Unph
AA	1353	2.25	post-hole 1352	0.5						+				Unph
AA	1384	2.75	post-hole 1383	0.6						+				Unph
AA	1390	16	pit 1389	7						+	1		<1	Unph
AA	1494	1.5	post-hole 1493	0.4						+	1			Unph
AA*	1521	30	pit 1520	3						+	2		<1	Unph
AA	1603	22	field ditch 1570	3.4						+				Unph
AA*	1659	30	pit 1658	8						+	4			Unph
AA	1673	23	slot 1672	5						+	4			Unph
AA	1681	2	post-hole 1680	0.2										unph
AA	1685	15	encl. ditch term. 1684	2.25						+	2			Unph
AA	1688	2	post-hole 1687	0.75						+			<1	Unph

Key:  
\$ burnt stone  
£/# — sherd no/weight in g.  
+ — 1-10; ++ 11-50; +++ 51-100; ++++ >500 pieces  
residue was contaminated and discarded before sorting  
♣ evaluation samples only flint supplied.

poor preservation and the very low density of finds recovered from the archaeological deposits. The distribution plots for charred cereal grains, the archaeological finds and charcoal are available in the archive report but are not included here. The site has been divided into four phases and the results of the assessment and further analysis are discussed below by phase. The inability to closely phase many of the sampled contexts has resulted in broad phase groups and a number of sampled features remain unassigned to a phase (see Table 3).

All the deposits were well drained sandy soils with much sandstone brash and no evidence for any preservation of uncharred contemporary plant or animal remains. Animal bone is extremely poorly preserved and the only bone that has been recovered from the soil samples was burnt and calcined, and none of it could be identified to bone element or taxa. The limitation of these soil conditions has led to the charred plant remains being the only evidence that is present in the samples in a condition to permit some level of analysis. Although uncharred plant seeds were present in many samples these are considered to be modern contaminants.

## THE CHARRED PLANT REMAINS

by J. A. Giorgi

### *Introduction*

On the basis of the assessment results, 40 samples (asterisked in Table 3) were selected for the analysis of the charred plant remains including two very rich botanical assemblages assessed from an earlier evaluation phase (Huntley 1999). The analysis of the charred plant remains from the site was recommended in order to address the following research questions:

- i) the range and relative importance of the different crop plants used at the site and possible changes over time
- ii) the identification, nature and spatial distribution of crop-processing and other activities on site
- iii) the recognition of aspects of crop husbandry on the basis of the cereal remains and processing debris
- iv) the nature of the settlement, i.e. whether it was a crop producer or consumer site

### *The Samples*

The forty analysed samples were collected from 34 contexts associated with 28 features. Samples were collected from all the phases of the site, but a number could not confidently be assigned to a single phase, and three of the richer samples remain unphased, although presumably Roman. They were collected from a range of feature types with the fills of ditches, slots and ovens providing most of the samples. The most extensively sampled features were the corn-drying oven 1100 (Phase I) with five samples, producing the richest charred assemblages from the site, and six samples from the fills of slot 1449 (Phase IV).

### *Identification*

The charred plant remains were divided by size through a stack of sieves for ease of sorting and then extracted from the flots with the exception of small cereal (less than 2 mm) and charcoal fragments. A binocular microscope was used together with modern and charred reference material and reference manuals for the identification of the botanical material. One exceptionally rich sample from fill 207, of the corn drying oven 1100, was divided using a riffle box, with a 12.5% subsample being sorted from the smaller



fraction (less than 2 mm). The remaining fraction of this flot, however, was scanned for the presence of additional species, which are denoted in Table 4 by a '+' symbol.

All the identifiable charred plant items were counted except for material that was difficult to quantify such as nut shell fragments, capsule fragments of heather/ling (*Calluna vulgaris*), stem and cereal awn fragments. Charcoal fragments were also not counted. The frequencies of these unquantified remains, however, were estimated and recorded using the following codes: + = 1–10; ++ = 11–100; +++ = 101–250; ++++ = 251–500; +++++ = 500+ fragments.

### Results

The results of the botanical analysis are described in full in the archive report but only those samples producing over 10 identifiable items are tabulated here (Tables 4 and 7). Thirty-seven of the 40 analysed samples produced identifiable and quantifiable charred plant remains with 5,648 plant items being counted, and 23 of these are tabulated below.

The vast majority of the identifiable charred plant remains were recovered from the fills of the oven, 1100, which produced just over 82% of all the quantified material. The remaining samples generally produced very low quantities of material with 80% of the samples containing less than 50 plant items. The breakdown by phase and context will be examined in detail below.

Cereal grains accounted for 55% (3,134 items) of the quantified remains, while 30% was represented by 1,706 chaff fragments, 3% by 143 loose cereal coleoptiles (the sheaf covering the emerging plumule or embryonic shoot) and the other 12% by the remains of other plants. The seeds of other plants were mainly from weeds although there were also a few other potential food plants, for example, nut shell fragments. The weed seeds may be under represented because the smaller sieve (less than 2mm) from oven fill 207 was only partly sorted, although cereal fragments from the same fraction were also not counted. Charcoal was present in variable quantities in all the samples and has been identified from selected contexts (see below).

### CEREALS

Cereals were well represented on the site by grains, cereal coleoptiles and chaff fragments. A percentage of the grains in the oven 1100 fills had germinated and the interpretation of these remains will be discussed below. Cereal grains appeared in 35 of the 40 samples although generally in low quantities (less than 50) except in samples from fill 1778 of slot 1776, fills of oven 1100 and fill 1150 of pit 1149 which accounted for just over 90% of all grains from the site. The condition of the cereal grains was generally very poor and almost three-quarters of the grains could not be identified. Over 90% of the identifiable grains belonged to wheat (*Triticum* spp.) while there were significantly smaller amounts of barley (*Hordeum sativum*), oats (*Avena* spp.) and rye (*Secale cereale*), represented by just 6%, 2% and 1%.

Chaff fragments were present in 26 samples with almost 95% of these fragments coming from slot fill 1778 and the fills of oven 1100. Most of the chaff (over 86%) consisted of wheat glume bases and spikelet forks/bases with significantly smaller quantities of mainly wheat and barley fragments and a ?rye rachis fragment along with a few oat awn and stem fragments.

### Wheats

Wheat was identified in 28 samples on the basis of grain and chaff fragments. Over 78% of the wheat grains, however, could not be reduced to species. The morphology of the remaining well preserved grains suggests that over 60% may be attributed to the glume







[illegible]

Key:

Features: GR = grave fill; GLY = gully fill; PIT = pit fill; DTH = ditch fill; OV = oven fill; PH = posthole fill; Charcoal = charcoal fragments.

Charcoal, cereal, stem fragments: + = 1-10; ++ = 11-100; +++ = 101-250; ++++ = 251-500; +++++ = >500 fragments  
Context 207: 12.5% subsample quantified from flot <2mm; remainder scanned

Context 207: 12.5% subsample quantified from flat < 2mm; remainder scanned



wheat, spelt (*Triticum spelta*), while 14 grains were identified as another glume wheat, emmer (*Triticum dicoccum*).

The predominance of spelt wheat on the site was confirmed by the presence of large quantities of diagnostic spelt chaff in 16 samples, represented mainly by glume bases plus a smaller number of spikelet forks/bases. The presence of emmer in the material was confirmed by the identification of a few emmer spikelet forks and glume bases in 4 samples.

A small number (17) of very rounded wheat grains in seven samples were classified as free-threshing wheat (*Triticum aestivum* s.l.). A single wheat rachis fragment was found in the sampled fill 1778 of slot 1776, which was tentatively identified as being from hexaploid free-threshing bread wheat, although no free-threshing grains were found in the same sample.

#### *Other cereals*

Barley was represented in 19 samples by 52 barley grains and rachis fragments. The well preserved barley grains included some twisted and hulled grains indicating that six-row hulled barley (*Hordeum sativum*) was present. Twenty-one oat grains from 11 samples were counted although the absence of oat floret bases made it impossible to establish whether these were wild (*Avena fatua*) or cultivated (*A. sativa*) oats. Several oat awn fragments were also present in sampled oven fills 206 and 207. Ten rye grains were identified in three samples and one possible rye rachis fragment in the sampled oven fill 207.

#### *Other Cereal Remains*

Other possible cereal residues included very small quantities of rounded stem fragments in three samples from fill 1778 of slot 1776 and fills 207 and 1094 of corn drying oven 1100. These may either be from cereal straw or large wild grasses although it is difficult to distinguish between the two (van der Veen 1991, 353). A total of 143 loose cereal coleoptiles were counted from three fills (206, 207, 1094) of oven 1100. It was not possible to identify these further although it is likely that they belong to wheat because this was the only cereal grain in the sampled oven 1100 fills that had germinated.

#### *Discussion of the Cereals*

The relative proportion of grains represented on the site and the predominance of spelt wheat reflects previous archaeobotanical results from Romano-British sites. Spelt wheat appears to be the main wheat grain used in this period on rural and urban sites (Greig 1991), in both southern and northern England (van der Veen 1992). Emmer wheat, on the other hand, tends to decline in the Roman period with the emergence of spelt. This appears to be the case at Thurnscoe (Table 4) and it is possible that the emmer was growing as a relic of previous harvests. Bread wheat is less common on Romano-British sites, and abundant at very few sites (Greig 1991, 309), although this cereal may be under represented because it is a free-threshing grain.

Barley is also usually well represented on Romano-British sites although this does not appear to be the case at Thurnscoe. It has a lower representation at Thurnscoe than in any of the native sites studied by Van der Veen (1992) except Hall's Hill in Northumberland. Rye is only occasionally found on other Romano-British sites and never in large quantities suggesting that it was not an important crop in the Roman period. It is however a free-threshing grain and therefore may be under-represented. Oat grains are also only usually found in low numbers in Romano-British deposits and probably represent cereal weeds rather than crops on the site. In the Roman period historical evidence suggests that oats were better known in their wild form (Spurr 1986, 61).



The cereal grains may have been used for bread, porridge, gruel and cakes (Wilson 1991, 234). Spelt wheat and barley were used for a gruel, known as *puls* or *pulmentus*, which was roasted, pounded, and cooked in water to make a porridge, similar to Italian polenta (Renfrew 1985, 22). Bread wheat may have been used for making a light leavened Roman bread known as *artophites*. Roman bread was also used in the preparation of other dishes as shown in the recipes of Apicius (Wilson 1991, 234). Barley may have been used for animal fodder, particularly for horses, and possibly brewing. No sprouted barley grains were found on the site to suggest brewing although germinated wheat grains from the oven 1100 samples raises the possibility of malting on site.

#### *Other Potential Economic Plants*

Some of the other charred plant remains from the site may represent economic plants. Eleven leguminous seeds were identified from six contexts although they were poorly preserved. Vetch/vetchling/pea (*Vicia/Lathyrus/Pisum* spp.) was identified in the sampled fill 1094 of oven 1100 while vetch (*Vicia* sp.) was identified in the sample from fill 1028 of ditch segment 1025, driveway 1411. It is not possible to establish whether these represent cultivated pulses but the small size of the seeds suggests that they may be from wild species, imported onto the site as cereal weeds.

Charred hazelnut (*Corylus avellana*) shell fragments were found in four samples from the oven 1100 fills, fill 1521 of pit 1520 and fill 1690 of ditch 1689, Enclosure F and two further samples not taken beyond assessment. This nut may have provided a useful food resource and is often found on Romano-British sites. The only other plant that may have been deliberately collected was heather, represented in the samples from fills 206, 207 of oven 1100, fill 1610 of hearth 1003 and fill 1450 of segment 1449, gully 1416. This would have made excellent tinder for fuelling the oven and hearth. Charcoal from this plant was identified in samples from contexts 1664 and 1610 (see below).

#### *Wild Plants*

The other botanical material in the charred assemblages represented a range of wild plants. Thirty samples produced identifiable weed seeds although these were mainly present in small assemblages of less than 20 items. The exceptions were the samples from fill 1778 of slot 1776 and the fills of oven 1100 (particularly 207) which accounted for just over 86% of all the identifiable seeds of wild plants.

The following ecological information is taken from *The Flora of the British Isles* (Clapham *et al.* 1987). The wild plants represented in the assemblages consisted mainly of weeds of disturbed (including arable) ground and waste places. The majority of the weed seeds could not be reduced to species, which limits ecological interpretation because species within a genus may grow in significantly different habitats. Even some of the plants from the site that could be reduced to species may grow in more than one habitat, eg. sheep's sorrel (*Rumex acetosella* gp.), which grows on heaths and grassland as well as on arable ground. The association of most of the charred weed seeds with cereal grains, however, suggests that they are mainly cereal weeds, imported onto the site incidentally with the harvested grain rather than growing wild in the vicinity of the site.

The best represented species in terms of item frequency and occurrence were the bromes (*Bromus* spp.), which accounted for almost 76% of the identifiable weed seeds in 17 samples. The well-preserved bromes were identified as rye-broom/lop-grass (*B. mollis/secalinus*). Other wild grasses were also fairly well represented although most of these could not be identified further with the exception of rye-grass (*Lolium* spp.), ?fescue (cf. *Festuca* sp.) and ?annual poa (*Poa* cf. *annua*). Docks (*Rumex* spp.), which included sheep's sorrel, were also relatively well represented and occurred in nine samples. The remaining



weed seeds were only found in one or several samples but included characteristic arable weed seeds — wild radish (*Raphanus raphanistrum*), corn cockle (*Agrostemma githago*), corn spurrey (*Spergula arvensis*), knotgrass (*Polygonum aviculare*), persicaria (*P. persicaria*), black bindweed (*Fallopia convulvulus*), cleavers (*Galium aparine*) and scentless mayweed (*Tripleurospermum maritimum* ssp. *inodorum*).

A number of the plants represented in the samples may be found in grassland and wetland habitats, e.g. buttercup (*Ranunculus* sp.), sedges (*Carex* spp.), the indeterminate grasses and legumes. Ribwort (*Plantago lanceolata*), grows today only in grassy places, on neutral and basic soils while heath grass (*Danthonia decumbens*) grows in acid grassland, locally on damp base rich soils. The presence of these species may indicate the presence of the residues of material collected for tinder or bedding. On the other hand, it has been suggested that these were arable weeds in the past, reflecting poor drainage and different levels of soil disturbance compared to today (van der Veen 1992, 104). For example, sedges have been found in granary deposits at South Shields (ibid. 75). The significance of these wild plants in relation to individual charred cereal assemblages and aspects of crop husbandry will be discussed below.

## AN EXAMINATION OF THE INDIVIDUAL CHARRED PLANT ASSEMBLAGES

The internal composition of individual charred plant assemblages may provide information on both the activities that produced the remains (Hillman 1981; 1984) and the use of the features from which the samples were recovered. The small size of most of the sample assemblages, however, prevents a detailed examination of potential activities within most sampled features. The exceptions are fill 1778 of slot 1776 and the sampled fills of the oven 1100, both Phase I, and possibly the combined sampled fills of slot 1449 in Phase IV.

### *Phase I, Slot Fill 1778 (Table 4)*

Six samples were analysed from Phase I although most of the plant remains were recovered from fill 1778 of slot 1776, which produced just over 96% of all the quantified material from Phase I.

Slot 1776 was located on the southern edge of the Phase I southern enclosure (A) (Fig. 8) and produced 42.1 plant items per litre of soil as well as a large quantity of charcoal. Chaff fragments formed the largest part of the assemblage accounting for 74% of all quantified remains while cereal grains and weed seeds made up 19% and 7% respectively.

Spelt wheat was the best-represented cereal. The chaff consisted mainly of wheat glume bases, a smaller quantity of spikelet forks and only a few wheat rachis fragments. Barley rachis fragments accounted for just over 10% of the chaff. The weed seeds mainly belonged to bromes, which accounted for 90% of the weed seeds. This is a large seeded weed which is often found in cereal storage deposits because it is difficult to extract through sieving being of a similar size to the grains. This assemblage mainly derives from the final stages of crop-processing with the wheat chaff and large weed seeds representing the by-products from the parching and final cleaning of the glume wheats prior to use or possibly storage. The barley rachis fragments also derive from the final stages of crop-processing. This assemblage suggests crop-processing activities in this part of the site or at least close-by.

Phase I Oven 1100 (Table 4)

The majority of plant remains were from fills 206, 207 and 1094 within oven 1100. 1094 was the basal fill of the feature. The other two sampled fills 1086 and 1093 of the oven produced very little material.

Cereal grains (including loose coleptiles) and chaff fragments make up most of the identifiable remains with smaller numbers of weed seeds. 1094 has the largest proportion of grains in relation to chaff while grains are slightly better represented than chaff in 207 and the reverse is true for 206. The cereal grains and chaff (mainly glume bases, spikelet forks/bases) in the three samples consisted mainly of wheat, which accounted for 96% of all identifiable grains and 99% of all identifiable chaff fragments, with spelt being the best represented species.

The greatest item frequency and species diversity of weed seeds were in 207. There were a relatively high number of large arable weed seeds especially bromes, but also some small weed seeds.

This feature has been interpreted as a corn drying oven. These structures may have been multi-functional in the Roman period. Van der Veen (1989) describes six potential uses in her study of charred plant assemblages from corn-driers at 21 Romano-British sites. The three rich assemblages from the Thurnscoe corn drier were found to most closely resemble Van der Veen's (1989) functions 3, 4, 5 and 6.

Functions 3, 4 and 5 concern the parching of glume wheats prior to pounding and winnowing, or the drying of grain prior to storage or milling. These activities are grouped together because they are difficult to differentiate on the basis of charred plant assemblages. These functions would be characterised in the case of spelt wheat by an equal number of grain and glume bases. While the proportions of grain to chaff in the three samples is not equal (Table 5), the poor condition of the material made quantification difficult and chaff may be under-represented because it is more fragile and therefore did not survive. The large weed seeds are characteristic of stored grain because they are difficult to separate other than by hand-sorting.

Function 6 concerns the roasting of germinated grain to stop the sprouting process when the lengths of the coleoptiles have reached the length of the grains. This function would be characterised by assemblages consisting almost entirely of grains, which had germinated prior to charring and large numbers of detached sprouts or coleoptiles. Glume bases and large weed seeds could also be present if the grain was allowed to germinate in spikelet form. Charred germinated grain, however, may also appear in samples when the grain is deliberately burnt to prevent further spoilage of stored grain that had accidentally sprouted.

TABLE 5: The item frequency and proportion of the cereal grains, chaff fragments and weed seeds in the sampled fills of oven 1100

Context	Cereals		Chaff		Weed seeds		Total
Fill 206	500	(41%)	588	(48%)	139	(11%)	1227
Fill 207 *	1217	(55%)	697	(31%)	313	(14%)	2227
Fill 1094	900	(79%)	145	(13%)	92	(8%)	1137
Total	2617	(57%)	1430	(31%)	544	(12%)	4591

(\*As noted above, the smaller sieve fraction of fill 207 was sub-sampled and therefore the number and proportion of weed seeds in this sample is under represented although cereal fragments smaller than 2 mm from the same sample were also not counted)



TABLE 6: The number of germinated, non germinated and indistinguishable wheat grains in fills 206, 207, 1094 of oven 1100

Context	Germinated grain		non germinated		unknown		Total
Fill 206	24	(20%)	35	(30%)	58	(50%)	117
Fill 207	71	(20%)	94	(26%)	200	(54%)	365
Fill 1094	52	(20%)	45	(18%)	163	(62%)	260
Total	147	(20%)	174	(23%)	421	(57%)	742

The three samples from the fills of the oven 1100 did include evidence of germinated wheat grain, loose coleoptiles, chaff and large weed seeds. The germinated grain was counted (Table 6) to attempt to establish whether germination was deliberate for malting or whether the material had been burnt to prevent further spoilage following accidental sprouting. It was difficult to quantify the numbers of germinated and non germinated grain because of poor preservation. The loose coleoptiles were not included in this estimate because it is possible that they could have come from the germinated grains, many of which only showed the depression along which sprouting had taken place.

The results show that over half of the wheat grains in the three samples could not be attributed either to germinated or non germinated grain. Of those grains that could be identified as having sprouted or not sprouted, between 40 and 54% had germinated. On the basis of these figures, it is difficult to establish whether the germination is deliberate or accidental. On the one hand, fully germinated grain fragments easily and therefore may be under-represented in the samples; indeed, many of the cereal grains in the three samples were broken up. On the other hand, it is possible that the detached coleoptiles were used as fuel together with straw and chaff which would distort the figures in the other direction (van der Veen 1989, 305).

The variation in the length of the sprouts, ranging from as little as a quarter to the full length of the grains, could be interpreted as evidence of accidental rather than deliberate germination. This argument was used to suggest accidental sprouting at Fengate Farm, Weeting, in Norfolk (Murphy 1984). Previous work on charred cereal assemblages from Romano-British sites also shows that germinated grain is often present and therefore may have been a common problem in Romano-British agriculture. Uniform germination, however, may be a ‘recent development with the selective breeding of barley cultivars’ (van der Veen 1989, 314).

It might also be considered unusual that spelt wheat rather than barley was the only germinated grain in the samples because the latter has always been the preferred brewing grain in western Europe. Celtic beer, made from barley was mentioned by Pytheas, the Greek explorer to Britain around 300 BC (Wilson 1991, 366) and the presence of barley at the site, albeit in lower quantities, does show that it would have been available for malting at the time. On the other hand, British beer was brewed from wheat in the first century AD (*ibid.*) while other Romano-British sites, for example Catsgore in Somerset (Hillman 1982), have produced very large numbers of virtually completely sprouted spelt wheat grain to suggest that it was used for malting. Since spelt wheat is the major cereal crop at the site it is quite possible that the local beer was a wheat beer.

To summarise, the corn drier may have been used for all these activities; for parching the glume wheats to facilitate processing, for the drying of the grains before storage or milling and also for malting. The charred plant assemblages from these samples could simply represent a mixture of the residues from these activities.

*Phase II Ditches* (Table 4)

The two ditch fills allocated to Phase II, at the northern end of the site produced relatively few identifiable items. The cereals produced included spelt wheat, rye and oat, and over a third of the cereal remains in ditch 1028 was chaff.

*Phases III, II–IV and III–IV* (Tables 4 and 7)

The charred plant remains from this group derive from samples taken from five ditch fills, three post-hole fills and a pit/posthole fill. Seven of the samples produced very small assemblages of mainly grains and a few chaff and weed seeds. The other two samples from fill 1690 of ditch 1689, Enclosure F and fill 1704 of pit/post-hole 1703 produced only a little more material, which consisted mainly of grains and chaff and a few weed seeds.

*Phase IV Samples* (Table 7)

The Phase IV samples were taken from a range of feature types, with six samples from a single context, the fill 1450 of slot 1449. The charred remains from all six samples just produced 78 items which consisted mostly of fully processed grain (80%) possibly accidentally charred during food preparation. Heather was identified in this sample which may be from tinder possibly used together with some of the wild plants represented.

The remaining ten samples from Phase IV mainly produced very low numbers of identifiable plant remains, mainly grains plus a little chaff and weed seeds in some samples. The sampled fill 1610 of hearth 1003, however, was slightly different in containing a relatively higher species diversity (although not frequency) of wild plants which included heather. These plants may represent the residues of tinder rather than crop-processing debris.

*Unphased Samples* (Table 7)

Two of the three unphased samples contained small flot assemblages. Pit fill 1150 contained a larger quantity of identifiable plant remains consisting virtually entirely (94%) of cereal grains possibly accidentally charred during cooking.

## CROP HUSBANDRY

Charred crop-processing by-products, particularly the weed seeds found in association with the cereals, can provide information on aspects of crop husbandry. The seed frequency and species diversity of weeds represented in the assemblages, however, was fairly low and mainly concentrated in the fills of oven 1100, particularly 207.

Arable weeds can provide an indication of the soil types being cultivated around a site, although most of the wild plants represented in the samples from Thurnscoe could not be reduced to species and may have grown in a range of soils. There was a small range of weeds, however, particularly in 207, that are characteristic of sandy soils. These include wild radish, corn spurrey, sheep's sorrel and heath grass, which tentatively suggests that such soils near the site may have been cultivated for cereals. These species, however, were only represented by a small number of seeds.

Sandy soils would have been suitable for growing the main cereals represented in the samples. Spelt wheat is a particularly hardy grain and can grow in a wide range of both heavy and light soils. Barley can also grow in a range of soils although it is best suited to light loams. Of the remaining cereals rye grows well on sandy soils (although it is unlikely that it was intentionally grown) while bread wheat is normally associated with deep clay loams and requires a greater soil fertility than spelt (Jones 1981, 107). Stinking mayweed (*Anthemis cotula*), an arable weed typical of heavy calcareous soils, was identified





[illegible]

Key as in Table 4



in an evaluation phase of the site (Huntley 1999) and is often identified with the cultivation of bread wheat. This author, however, could not find any seeds of this taxa in the detailed analysis and therefore no further comment can be made. It was absent from all of the sites studied by Van der Veen (1992) in northern England.

Two other wild plants provide information on aspects of crop husbandry. Sowing times can be indicated by the germinating times of arable weeds. Thus, cleavers (*Galium aparine*), an autumn germinating weed, was identified in several of the samples from oven 1100, which suggests the autumn sowing of cereals. Tilling methods at the site may be hinted at by the presence of a small number of heath grass seeds in a few samples. This is a plant that grows today in acid grassland and local damp base rich soils. Its presence, however, in Roman granary deposits of spelt and bread/club wheat at South Shields (Tyne and Wear) (van der Veen 1992, 76) and in association with spelt chaff at the late Iron Age site of Cefn Graeanog in Wales (Hillman 1981, 146) suggests that it was an arable weed in the past. The disappearance of heath grass has been attributed to the change from ard to mouldboard ploughing in the medieval period, which eliminated perennial and biennial weeds from cereal fields (*ibid.*).

## THE NATURE OF THE SETTLEMENT

The charred plant assemblages from this site may be compared to two models which have been used for differentiating consumer from producer sites in order to establish whether the site was producing its own crops and a tradable surplus or importing the foodstuffs from elsewhere. The first model is based on ethnographic work from Turkey (Hillman 1984) with the results showing that producer sites are characterised by the presence of products and by-products from the early stages of crop-processing, for instance, rachis and awn fragments, weed seeds, and in particular straw waste. Straw, however, is rarely preserved as charred remains and in any event may appear on consumer sites as residues from imported fodder or building materials (van der Veen 1991, 353). The second model is based on archaeobotanical evidence from a number of late Iron Age and Romano-British sites in the Upper Thames Valley. This characterises producer sites by a high plant item density per litre of sediment and by the presence of large numbers of grains, where at least half of the samples contain more than 50% grain (Jones 1985).

The richer assemblages were characterised by both large quantities of plant remains per litre of soil and by the predominance of cereal grains, which made up over 50% of the identifiable material in most of the samples. The smaller arable weed seeds, awn and rachis fragments, and stem fragments could represent waste from the early stages of crop-processing although these were represented only by very low amounts of material in most samples, although relatively abundant in the two richest features. The early by-products of crop-processing, however, are rarely found preserved on archaeological sites and the plant remains from Thurnscoe appear to satisfy the criteria, to some degree, from both of these models for being a producer settlement. Distinguishing between consumer and producer settlements may, however, be a little more complex than is suggested by these two models (van der Veen 1991, 357; Greig 1991, 309).

## THE CHARCOAL REMAINS

*Rowena Gale*

### *Introduction*

Fuel residues were recovered from numerous contexts across the site. The frequency of coal in these contexts suggested that it formed an intrinsic element of the domestic fuel,

used in conjunction with wood. It was evident, however, that in contexts in which charcoal was abundant, coal was often absent or minimal, and these generally seem to have been associated with specific activities such as cereal processing or other functions that occurred in kiln/oven and hearth features. By implication, fuels selected for agricultural or industrial activities specifically focused on wood rather than coal, despite the possibly easy access to local coal measures.

Charcoal analysis was undertaken on four charcoal-rich samples, associated with specific features from Phases I and IV, in order to establish the character and likely origin of the fuel (e.g. from managed woodland), and its function. The analysis also provided environmental data and enabled the selection of suitable material for radiocarbon dating (contexts 1664 and 1154 — see below).

Materials and Methods

The charcoal was extracted from the samples in the manner described in the assessment report (Rackham 2000). The charcoal was mostly well preserved and abundant, and, in context 1154, occurred in large fragments. Fragments measuring >2 mm in radial cross-section were considered for examination. Samples from contexts 1664, 1154 and 1610 were examined in full but context 1778 was 50% sub-sampled.

The charcoal was firstly sorted to type based on the anatomical features observed using a x20 hand lens on freshly fractured transverse surfaces. Representative fragments were selected from each group for detailed study at high magnification. These were fractured again to provide additional surfaces in the tangential and radial planes. The prepared fragments were supported in washed sand and examined using a Nikon Labophot incident light microscope at magnifications of up to x400 and matched to reference slides.

When possible the maturity (i.e. heartwood/ sapwood) of the wood was assessed and the number of growth rings recorded. It should be noted that measurements of stem diameters are from charred material and, when living, these stems may have been up to 40% wider.

Results

The results of the charcoal analysis are summarised in Table 8. The anatomical structure of the charcoal was consistent with the taxa or groups of taxa given below. Classification follows that of *Flora Europaea* (Tutin, Heywood *et al.* 1964–80).

TABLE 8: Charcoal from features in Phases II and IV

Feature		Acer	Alnus	Betula	Corylus	Ericaceae	Prunus	Quercus
Phase I								
1664	Beam slot 1665, AA	—	—	—	—	231 st	—	—
1778	Slot 1776, AA	2	2	—	8	—	116	67 h, 2 s
Phase IV								
1154	Oven/kiln 1134, AC	—	—	39 s	36 s	—	11	31 h, 721 r,s
1610	Hearth 1003	—	—	2	—	152 st	—	8 h,s

Key: h = heartwood; r = roundwood (diameter <20mm); s = sapwood (diameter unknown); st = stem  
The number of fragments identified is indicated.



Aceraceae. *Acer* sp., maple

Betulaceae. *Alnus* sp., alder; *Betula* sp., birch

Corylaceae. *Corylus* sp., hazel

Ericaceae. *Erica* sp. and *Calluna vulgaris*, heathers and ling. Many members of the heather family are anatomically similar.

Fagaceae. *Quercus* sp., oak

Rosaceae. *Prunus spinosa*, blackthorn.

### Phase I

Contexts 1664 and 1778, from beam slots, occurred in roughly the same area on the southern boundary of the site. Charcoal from context 1664 (beam slot 1665) was composed entirely of narrow stems from the heather family (Ericaceae), measuring up to 10 mm in diameter. All but the narrowest stems ( $< 1$  mm) were examined and identified, and provided a 10 g sample for radiocarbon dating.

In contrast, charcoal from context 1778, from slot 1776, consisted of small fragments from a range of deciduous woody taxa (excluding ericaceous stems). Narrow blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) stems, measuring up to 12 mm in diameter with 5 growth rings, and small fragments of oak (*Quercus*) heartwood and sapwood made up the bulk of the sample, although alder (*Alnus*), hazel (*Corylus*) and maple (*Acer*) were also identified (Table 8).

### Phase IV

An oven or kiln 1134, sited over the Phase II southern enclosure ditch, produced the largest volume of charcoal (540 g) from the site. Coal and cinders were absent. The charcoal consisted of roundwood, much of it fairly narrow, and some of the larger pieces of oak carried long oblique tool marks (perhaps from slashing or lopping stems for firewood). The greater proportion of the charcoal consisted of oak (*Quercus*). Complete radial sections of oak roundwood ranged from 12 to 15 mm (estimated charred diameters: 25–30 mm) and included from 6 to 8 growth rings. Where fragments included the outer surface of the wood it was evident that the stems had been cropped in winter or during dormancy. Some fragmented pieces from the outer sapwood area of oak derived from wide, fast-grown roundwood (e.g. with 6 mm wide growth rings); a rough estimate based on the dimensions of these fragments suggested that they had originated from (charred) stems at least 60 mm in diameter. While these larger, fragmented pieces of oak suggested the type of fast growth characteristic of managed woodland, it was interesting to note that the growth pattern of the narrower oak roundwood was initially fairly slow but increased with age (the opposite to that of normal coppice growth). A small quantity of oak heartwood was also recorded.

Hazel (*Corylus*), birch (*Betula*) and blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) was also identified but were comparatively sparse (see Table 8); also a single piece of blackthorn stem/ twig (diameter 3 mm). The birch and hazel was fragmented and it was difficult to assess the likely dimensions of the whole stems. Both included fast grown wood, and the hazel, in particular, could have been from managed coppice although probably on a relatively long rotation (e.g.  $> 10$  years), and cropped when dormant. Dimensions of the birch fragments suggested stems with diameters of 50+ mm.

In addition the sample contained a quantity of unidentified bark with maximum thicknesses of 3 mm. The smooth outer (corky) surfaces with lenticels were similar to both hazel and birch bark.

Context 1610 from hearth feature 1003 contained numerous small fragments of charcoal, mainly heather stems (Ericaceae) up to 13 mm in diameter. A few fragments of hazel (*Corylus*) and oak (*Quercus*) were also identified.



### Discussion

Examination of the fuel residues from the two Phase I samples identified different taxa in each sample. Charcoal deposits from context 1664 were composed entirely of stems from the heather family (Ericaceae), while those from context 1778 included mostly blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) and oak (*Quercus*), but also hazel (*Corylus*), alder (*Alnus*) and maple (*Acer*). The resinous evergreen foliage and narrow stems of heather burn fiercely with an intense but short-lived heat; fires require regular stoking and refuelling to keep them burning for any length of time. The dimensions of the wood fuel associated with context 1778 are unknown, but would certainly have included wider stems than those of the heather and would have provided a good source of heat without requiring as much attention as the heather fire. The apparent selection of different types of fuel could implicate either different applications or usage or, if used for similar processes, the availability of fuel.

Cereal processing requires relatively low temperatures so that the crop is not scorched or caught alight. Low grade or twiggy fuel would be adequate and could be burnt in small amounts to maintain a constant heat. In fact odds and ends from various activities could be usefully employed, for example hedge trimmings, scrub clearance, heather stripped from land to allow new young growth for fodder, or discarded bedding or heather thatch. Heather has traditionally provided fuel (Edlin 1949; Mabey 1996), and its use as such at the farmstead is verified by the fuel residues from 1664 and 1610. The overall similarity of the residue from 1664 (fill of slot 1665) and that from 1610 (fill of hearth 1003) could suggest similar origins for these samples or similar functions.

As noted above, the charcoal residues (context 1610) from the hearth, feature 1003, confirmed the use of heather (Ericaceae), birch, and oak (*Quercus*) sapwood and heartwood. This combination would have provided a very efficient heat source. Heather is readily combustible and could be used as tinder or a means of boosting the temperature of the fire. Oak heartwood tends to be longer-lived than the lightweight wood of birch, although the latter produces an intense heat.

The oven or kiln, feature 1134, was fired with wider roundwood, largely oak (*Quercus*) but also incorporated birch (*Betula*), hazel (*Corylus*) and blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*). Dimensions extrapolated from figures given above for charred diameters suggest that oak stems may have been up to 60mm wide and birch 90mm in width when cut from the living trees. The firing in this kiln was almost certainly intended to produce high temperatures for a much longer period of time than, for example, the fire in hearth 1003.

The total absence of coal from this context is unusual, given its presence and often frequency in other fuel residues from the site (see the archive report). Wood was evidently the preferred fuel for use in this context. Perhaps temperatures required careful control or boosting at critical points during the firing. Well-seasoned roundwood has the ability to increase temperatures quickly. The size and diameter of the fuel is dependent on the draught or ventilation in the kiln — with a strong draught fires consume very narrow roundwood too quickly to be practical, so thicker roundwood is necessary (Hodges 1964).

### ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

The taxa identified are mostly typical of the sandy soils that prevailed at the site. Maple (*Acer*) prefers neutral or calcareous soils and its paucity in the samples is probably indicative of its low distribution in the area. The combination of birch (*Betula*), oak (*Quercus*) and heather (Ericaceae) could imply open woodland or rough ground unsuitable for crops. The character of the contemporary woodland (i.e. managed or 'natural') is difficult to determine. A good deal of the charcoal (oak, birch and hazel) from the oven/ kiln



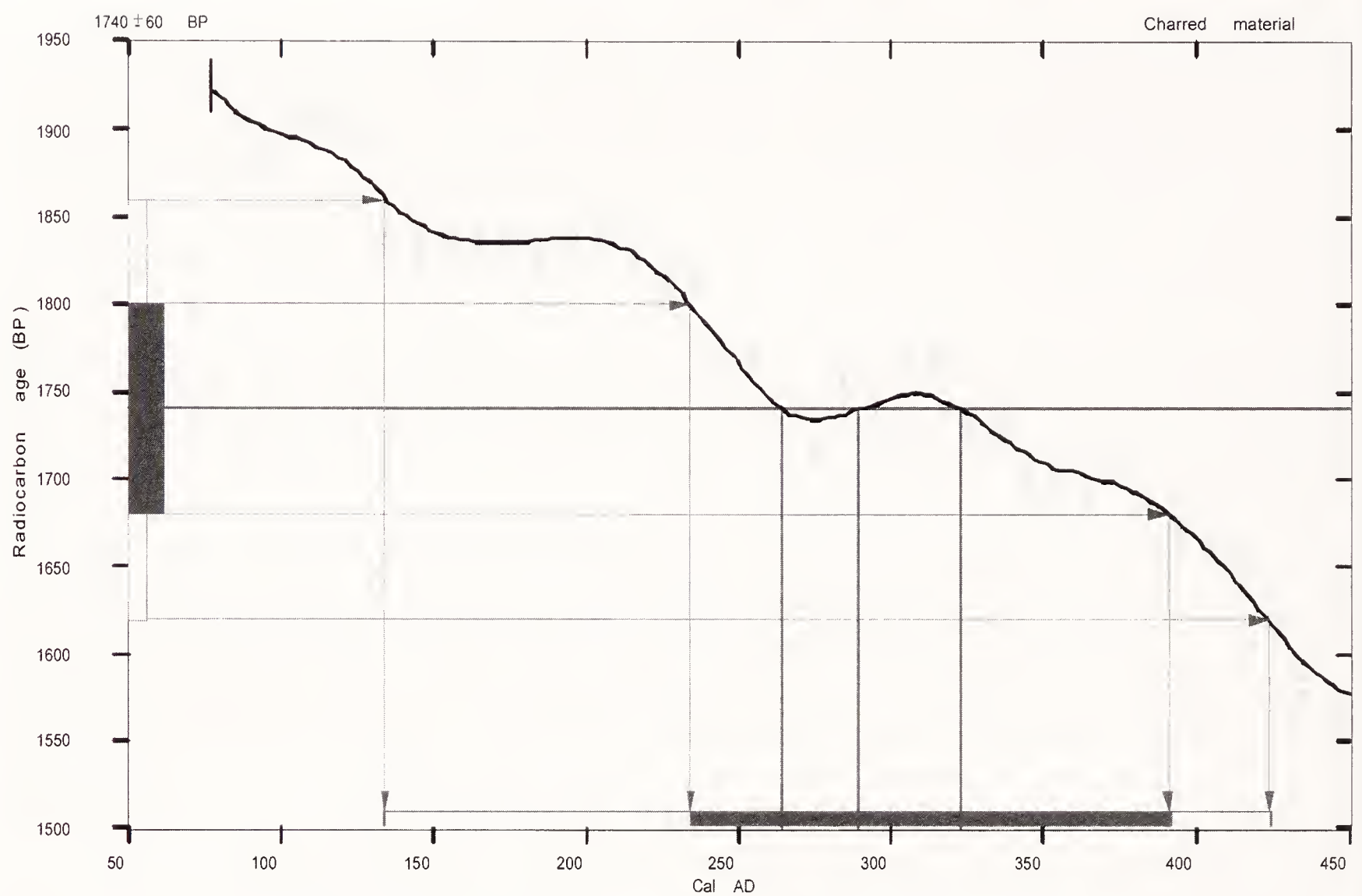


Fig. 29. Radiocarbon calibration curve for context 1664.

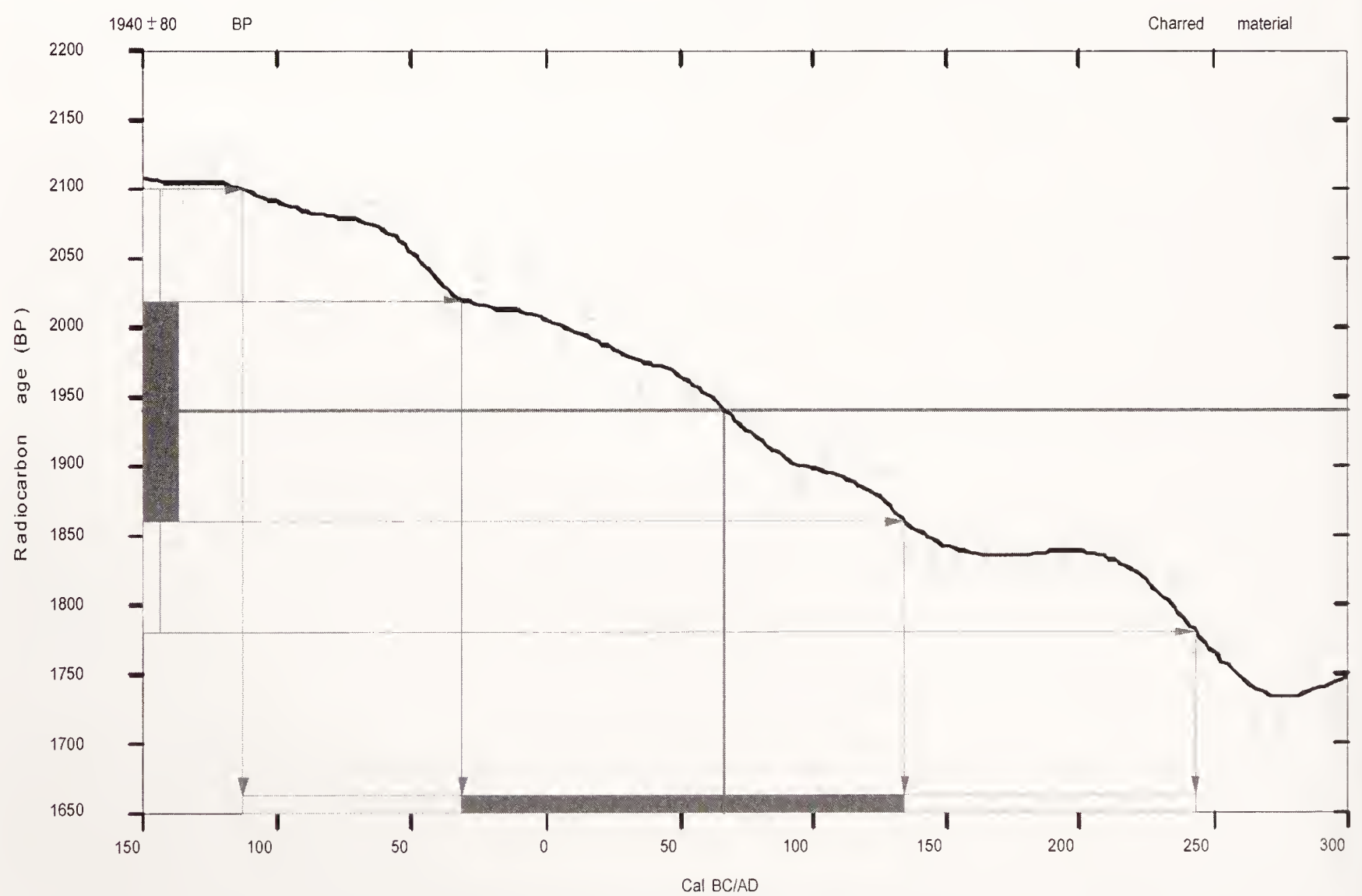


Fig. 30. Radiocarbon calibration curve for context 207.

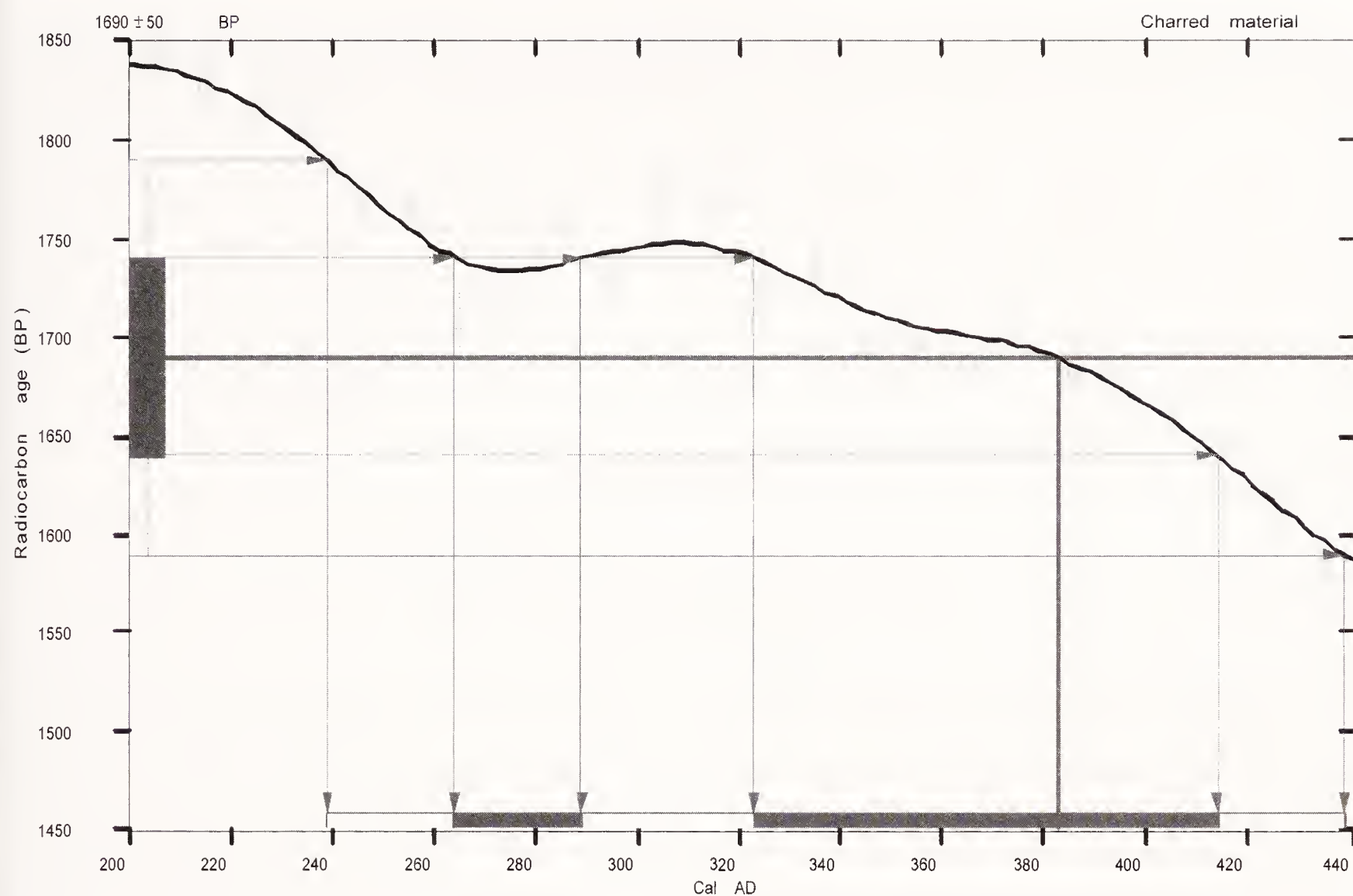


Fig. 31. Radiocarbon calibration curve for context 1154.

1134 was cropped from fast-growing trees or shrubs. Complete roundwood sections of oak tended to include rather narrow early growth rings that became wider in later years — the reverse of normal coppice growth. Fast growth in later years could imply reduced competition from surrounding vegetation or a sudden improvement in edaphic and climatic conditions. Some hazel roundwood, however, was more typical of coppice growth. The evidence for managed woodland as an organised practice was therefore unconvincing for all species except hazel, although the repeated cutting of stems from other trees and shrubs could have imposed a type of coppicing. Some oak stems were cut when relatively young, e.g. 6–8 years, whereas, there was no evidence of hazel less than 10 years old. It is feasible that some brushwood was pruned from hedgerows or invasive scrub, especially the blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) which consisted of narrow stems up to 5 years old.

## RADIOCARBON ANALYSES

*James Rackham*

Three samples were submitted for radiocarbon assay. 11 g of ericaceous charcoal from the fill, 1664, of beam slot 1665 from Phase I deposits in the southern part of the Phase I Enclosure A, 6 g of charred cereal grain from context 207 in Phase I corn drier 1100, and 50 g of oak roundwood from sample 1154 from the Phase IV oven/ kiln were submitted to Beta Analytic Inc., Florida, for analysis. The results are shown in Table 9 and Figures 29–31.



TABLE 9: Radiocarbon analysis results

Phase	Context	Lab No.	Measured age	Conventional age	Intercept	1 sigma	2 sigma
I	1664	Beta-146110	1740 ± 60 BP	1690 ± 60	AD 260 & AD 290 & AD 320	AD 230–390	AD 130–420
I	207	Beta-150255	1900 ± 70 BP	1940 ± 80	AD 70	BC 30–AD 130	BC 110–AD 240
IV	1154	Beta-146109	1690 ± 50 BP	1690 ± 50	AD 380	AD 260–290 & AD 320–410	AD 240–440

The calibration curves for all three dates are present in Figs 29–31.

ARCHAEOMAGNETIC DATING

C. M. Batt

Two features, which were thought to be fired, were encountered during the excavations. 12 samples were taken from reddened material (context 1151) infilling a pit (1149) cut into bedrock and 13 samples were taken from burnt clay (context 1064) within a possible hearth (1003). Samples from the pit infill did not record a consistent, stable magnetisation, and the directions of magnetisation were widely scattered. These results were consistent with the material not having been fired *in situ* to a sufficient temperature and therefore the context was undateable. Samples from the burnt clay did show a stable magnetisation, which may be indicative of the geomagnetic field in which the structure last cooled. The mean magnetic direction suggested a date for last use of the hearth of AD 160–400 or AD 1250–1440. The later date can be rejected on archaeological grounds. The large error ranges at 95% confidence are a reflection of the relatively large scatter in the data and slow movement of the geomagnetic field in this period (Batt 1997).

DATING OF MAGNETIC DIRECTION

The mean declination and inclination after demagnetisation were corrected to Meriden, the reference locality for the British calibration curve, using the standard method (Noel and Batt 1990). The corrected mean site direction was then dated by comparison with the Clark calibration curve in the conventional manner, shown in Table 10 (Clark *et al.* 1988).

TABLE 10: Summary of results. All directions are corrected to Meriden and errors are at 95% confidence

Description	Context No.	Initial measurements (mean in degrees)			After pilot demagnetisation (mean in degrees)			Date range
		Dec	Inc	α <sub>95</sub>	Dec	Inc	α <sub>95</sub>	
Burnt clay in pit	1151	48.7	37.8	15.6	52.4	29.6	16.7	Undatable
Hearth	1064	3.1	56.3	6.8	2.4	58.5	5.2	160AD–400AD or 1250AD–1440AD

In archaeomagnetic dating it is often necessary to give multiple possible date ranges as the earth's magnetic field has had same direction at different times in the past. However, the available archaeological evidence is usually sufficient to select the most likely range. In this case, the date range for the hearth is most likely to be AD 160–AD 400, which is consistent with the archaeological evidence. The burnt clay in the pit cannot be dated as, although it shows evidence of being heated, the scattered directions suggest that either it has been redeposited or disturbed since heating or that it was not heated to sufficient temperature to reset the magnetisation associated with its geological origin.

## DISCUSSION

### DATING AND CHRONOLOGY

The ceramic and radiocarbon dating evidence suggests that the settlement at Thurnscoe was occupied between the mid-second and mid-fourth centuries AD. Only limited indirect evidence for possible pre-Roman Iron Age activity was found in the form of several fragments of 'Iron Age Grey' slag which have so far been found exclusively on Late Iron Age sites. Only occasional sherds of hand-made pottery in a native tradition were recovered and these occurred in contexts containing unambiguously Roman pottery. No evidence was recovered during excavation for any post Roman activity.

The settlement changed in size, layout and organization of space throughout its history (Fig. 5) and at least four distinct phases were recognised. The earliest recognisable plan comprised two relatively small, rectangular enclosures with an entrance area to the north and some structural evidence (but no roundhouses) concentrated in the southernmost enclosure. There was some evidence to suggest that the southern enclosure was pre-dated by a fenced enclosure. Within the south-eastern corner of the southern enclosure was a small concentration of features which bore evidence of burning and heating. These may represent a cooking area supporting the interpretation that the southern enclosure was primarily domestic occupation. This phase dates to the late second to third centuries AD.

These enclosures were then replaced by two much more substantial conjoined enclosures in Phase II in the third to the early fourth centuries AD. A rectangular and a D-shaped enclosure covered approximately three times the area of the initial settlement and were defined by substantially deeper ditches. The focus of structural activity shifted at this time with the evidence for domestic structures now concentrated within the D-shaped enclosure. This may have been a gradual development, as the position of the northern entrance of the Phase I enclosure (B) was perpetuated in Phase II. Similarly, the eastern ditch of the Phase I enclosures was substantially re-cut as the central ditch between the two Phase II enclosures. The major driveway ditches and the field ditches which are associated with the enclosures in this phase were also substantial cut features, but like the enclosures these would seem to be redefining elements that were at least partially established in an earlier phase. In Phase III the western enclosure ceased to be defined by a ditch while the eastern enclosure continued to be occupied and the driveway ditch and field system was maintained. This phase dates to the late third to the early fourth centuries AD. In Phase IV the eastern enclosure ditches also went out of use but occupation of the site continued with evidence for hearths/ovens, less substantial ditches and pits overlying the earlier phase. The ceramic evidence suggests that significant occupation of the site may have ceased after *c.* AD 350 due to the absence of most of the common later Yorkshire and Lincolnshire pottery forms and fabrics.



## POST-BUILT STRUCTURES

Concentrations of postholes and stakeholes occurred within two areas of the site: within the area defined by Enclosure A and within Enclosure E/F (Figs 5 and 11). The precise phasing of these features is problematic as artefactual material was only recovered from a limited number of them. The ditch on the northern and western side of the Phase I Enclosure A appeared to form the limit of a significant concentration of postholes and stakeholes, but it is equally possible that these could reflect an earlier parallel arrangement or continuity of activity in the southwest-corner of Enclosure D in Phase II. The postholes recorded within the eastern Enclosures E/F were concentrated largely within a distinct hollow, but they could relate to Phases II, III or IV.

Many of the postholes and stakeholes within Enclosure A appeared to form lines, rather than arcs, and they may therefore represent fence lines or agricultural structures. One group of nine large postholes appeared to represent the northern, western and south-western sides of a fenced enclosure; and it may be significant that three similar sized postholes were cut by the ditch forming the south-eastern corner of Enclosure A. It seems likely that there was an iron smithy close to the northern side of Enclosure A as a large primary deposit of plate hammerscale (which would have accumulated on the floor of a smithy) was recovered from a posthole in that area. Unfortunately, the surrounding postholes made no clear structural pattern and the closest oven or hearth-like feature identified in this area lay over 11 m to the south-east.

It would seem likely that a number of the postholes identified within Enclosures E/F represent a series of overlying structures. At least four partial arcs between 6m and 10m in diameter of discrete square postholes can be suggested (Figure 14: W, X, Y and Z), although only the larger arcs may have been possible roundhouses. No evidence of any associated floor surfaces or possible hearths was found and none of these features was associated with a drip gully. However, a relatively large concentration of charred cereal grains was recovered from the postholes associated with arc W, particularly the southern postholes, and the relatively large assemblage of domestic pottery recovered from this part of the site, would suggest that they were associated with a domestic structure. In this context, it is significant that the small coin assemblage was recovered from contexts in Enclosure E/F and from no other part of the site. Two postholes set within the entrance on the north-eastern side of Enclosure E appeared to form part of a gate.

## THE CORN-DRIER

A large T-shaped corn drying oven was found to lie outside the main enclosures towards the northern edge of the site. The construction of the corn drying oven has been tentatively placed within Phase I based on the early radiocarbon date and pottery evidence. Joining sherds of a second-century bead and flange mortarium rim were recovered from within the collapsed superstructure of the oven and within the charcoal in the base of the fire pit at Thurnscoe. The oven may have continued in use throughout the occupation of the site as is evidenced by a sherd of later third/fourth century AD South Yorkshire Late Roman Redware retrieved from the infill of the fire pit. However, the fire pit may have been infilled some time after the oven had gone out of use.

T-shaped corn-driers have been found distributed in a belt across England from the Humber Estuary to Dorset and are thought to have been introduced to Britain in the second century AD (Morris 1979). Their presence is thought to illustrate some level of acculturation of Roman ways of life within the rural farmstead. Regional examples of similar T-shaped corn drying ovens have been found at Womersley in North Yorkshire (12 miles north of Thurnscoe); at Winterton, Langtoft and Welton Wold in Humberside;



at Swaythorpe, East Yorkshire; and at Sapperton, Lincolnshire (Morris 1979). The Womersley example (Buckland and Dolby 1987), though smaller, was similar in construction to the oven at Thurnscoe. Both ovens had an oval fire pit at the foot of the main flue which itself appeared to have been capped with flat stones, and neither oven bore any evidence of a former surrounding structure.

The charred plant remains recovered from the corn drying oven at Thurnscoe suggests that it had a multi-functional use processing stored grain. Experimental archaeology has demonstrated the use of a corn-drying oven can reduce the moisture content of grain to improve keeping quality and discourage mildew, fungus and insect pests during storage (Reynolds and Langley 1979). The charred plant remains comprised cereal grains, chaff fragments and weed seeds. These suggest that the oven was used for the parching of glume wheats prior to pounding and winnowing, or the drying of the grain prior to storage or milling. A proportion of the grain could be identified as having germinated and because it is difficult to determine whether germination was deliberate or accidental, it is possible that the oven was also used either for malting or to roast the germinated grain to stop further spoilage. Spelt wheat rather than barley was the only germinated grain in the samples and this would suggest that the inhabitants may have been producing wheat beer.

## RELATIONSHIP OF THE ENCLOSURES TO THE FIELD SYSTEM

The Phase II enclosures were linked to a wider, managed landscape by several features including a droveway to the north and by boundary or field ditches to the south and east. There was evidence that some of these elements may have been present from the outset but only the southern ditch extension of the central ditch continued into the final phase. Neither the geophysical survey, the watching brief, nor the available aerial photographic evidence has enabled the form of the field system around the site to be clearly mapped. The evidence that has survived suggests that the enclosure and droveway existed in a pattern of large irregular fields. These fields may have formed part of an organised field system similar to that recognised throughout much of South Yorkshire and (Riley 1976; 1977; 1980; Branigan 1989; Chadwick 1997). The major planned field systems of South Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire have been shown to be Iron Age in origin and not the result of significant landscape-alteration under Roman influence (Millett 1990, 120; Riley 1980). Droveys were a common feature of the Romano-British landscape, their function was probably for movement of stock between fields and/or settlements without allowing access to the neighbouring arable crops. For example, Pickburn Leys, Doncaster (Sydes 1993) comprised a droveway connecting the corner of a field to a small enclosure; a droveway was also encountered at Stripe Road, Rossington (Chadwick 1993). A cropmark complex at Goldthorpe (Cumberpatch 1993), two kilometres south of Thurnscoe, comprised a droveway with two enclosures at its northern end cut into the sandstone bedrock. The droveway and enclosure ditch dimensions were shown to be of similar size to the enclosure and ditches recorded at Thurnscoe.

The changing layout and re-cutting of the enclosure, droveway and field boundary ditches at Thurnscoe attests to the constantly changing layout of the landscape as has been demonstrated at many other sites in the region such as Rampton, Nottinghamshire (Ponsford 1992). The excavated evidence at Thurnscoe indicated that the droveway and field ditches were most likely cut during the mid-third century AD, yet were shown to have been infilled prior to the abandonment of the settlement. The combined evidence from excavated cropmark sites within South Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire suggests, not that the uniform brickwork field system was cut into the landscape in one period, but that the general pattern was gradually expanded at different times in different places



throughout the region during both the later Iron Age and the Romano-British period. Field ditches moved and migrated, were replaced or infilled, as the requirements and needs of the individual settlements changed. For example, excavation at Pickburn Leys, Doncaster (Sydes 1993) identified a large enclosure ditch which contained Iron Age pottery in its primary fill. A ditched droveway which was associated with Romano-British pottery respected the corner of the enclosure ditch implying the enclosure was still an extant feature within the landscape. At Scrooby Top (Davies *et al.* 1997) and Dunston's Clump (Garton 1987) first century AD enclosures appear to have been added to an existing Iron Age field system which continued in use through to the third century AD (Robbins 1997).

## ACTIVITIES ACROSS THE SITE

The presence of tiny fragments of burnt bone and the general distribution of charcoal and charred grain in the soil samples indicated that most of the features at Thurnscoe were receiving debris from occupation, particularly fire ash and other domestic refuse. The large number of samples that produced one or two flakes of hammerscale also suggested that both industrial and domestic waste material was readily blown and transported around the settlement. The scatter of hammerscale throughout the deposits suggested that iron smithing was taking place on the site, however, only indirect evidence of the location of one possible smithy floor was found in the northern part of Phase I Enclosure A, (or alternatively in the central eastern part of Phase II Enclosure D), based upon a very high concentration of plate hammerscale in a posthole in that area. Several abraded fragments of slag associated with the forging of iron objects or recycling of iron (hearth bottoms) were also recovered, but from contexts widely dispersed across the site (in Phases II and III). The presence of several fragments of a more problematic group of slags in the northern ditch of the Phase II Enclosure D, termed 'Iron Age Grey', may also suggest a continuation of Iron Age tradition metal working techniques at this site.

Five features which were either ovens or associated flues (1665, 1776, 1200, 1003 and 1134) were identified in the western part of site in Phases I, II and IV. They would appear to divide into two groups based on the fuel waste and the presence or absence of associated charred cereal remains. Three of these features (1665, 1200 and 1003) all produced small quantities of fired clay and abundant (heather/ling) charcoal and no significant charred crop or weed seed. Although these charcoal deposits may have resulted from burning old thatch or bedding, heather can be used like furze for fuelling baking ovens and kilns. These assemblages may reflect such use, although they would imply closed oven/kiln structures which retain the heat generated by the fast fierce burn of such material. Only oven 1003 contained clear evidence of what was probably the stone flagged base of such a structure.

The remaining two flue-like structures (1776 and 1134) which belonged to Phases I and IV respectively were associated with charcoal which indicated the use of mixed wood fuel, with blackthorn and oak roundwood/heartwood predominating. This reflects a need for a more sustained heat than that obtainable from the burning of ericaceous stems. There were little or no associated charred cereal remains with flue 1134 and, while it was somewhat similar in form to some of the 'bowl and long hearth' type features recognised by Morris (1979), its use must remain uncertain. In contrast, flue 1776 was associated with an abundance of charred cereal remains, particularly chaff. While this latter material might simply be evidence that crop cleanings were used as fuel, it could reflect a corn drying function, prior to threshing or one of the later stages of processing.

The T-shape corn-drier has been discussed above, however, it is significant to note that unlike all the other oven/hearth type features, it was located in an area which



became a trackway, outside the area of the main enclosures. The fragments of two broken millstone grit querns discarded within ditch fills point to a level of cereal processing on the site, but this limited evidence does not clarify where exactly this activity was taking place.

The tendency for slightly greater concentrations of charred cereal in a small group of Phase II–IV postholes in the D-shaped enclosure (E/F) and in its ditch terminals may reflect a focus of domestic occupation in this part of the enclosure. A similar concentration, including pottery, bone and firecracked pebble, around the Phase IV enclosure in the south west of the site might also indicate proximity to contemporary living areas.

## FUEL

Charcoal, although ubiquitous across the site, was generally found in relatively small quantities and rarely in fragments sufficiently large to permit easy identification of the wood species. Coal was as common and had clearly been burnt and therefore it seems likely that coal was used on the site for the normal domestic open fires. It does not appear to have been used for the industrial activity on the site since the three iron smithing hearth bottoms from the site that included fuel imbedded within them contained only charcoal. Many types of coal are unsuitable for iron smithing because they contain sulphur (Cowgill, pers. comm.). The wood and heaths used as fuel probably derived from local woodland and hedgerows and acid heaths. The samples from the site indicated the availability of heather or ling, oak, blackthorn, birch, hazel, maple and alder. Heather or ling, oak, blackthorn, hazel and birch were the most important and probably reflect availability and preference. There were indications that the hazel was coppiced, but there was no evidence for the coppicing of the other trees, although young oak roundwood was clearly an important resource. Evidence of coppicing is indicative of an organised landscape with areas of woodland as well as pasture and arable land being managed by respective settlements. Oak and hazel were the dominant trees in ancient woodland in Yorkshire (Rackham 1986) and oak, hazel and birch are characteristic of ancient woodlands on light acid soils (Peterken 1981).

## AGRICULTURE

Although the presence of a droveway attests to some degree of animal husbandry and the frequency of small fragments of burnt bone in the samples suggests that most deposits originally contained both uncharred and burnt bone debris, little bone actually survived due to poor preservational conditions. This lack of one of the major refuse components severely restricts any overall reconstruction of the farmstead's agricultural economy and the available evidence is limited largely to the evidence of arable crops. However, it is interesting that in such a small assemblage of animal remains four of the nine contexts contain recognisable elements of horse. Typically, cattle would be expected to be notably more abundant than horse. The potential importance of horses to the settlement may be reflected in the possible placed deposit of a snaffle bit within one of the ditch terminals at the entranceway to Enclosure F. Placed deposits, considered to have a symbolic meaning, are not uncommonly found in Late Iron Age and Romano-British ditch terminals and this snaffle bit should be considered as such an item.

The environmental evidence illustrated that spelt wheat was the major cereal crop utilised at the site. The presence of the corn drier and its associated cereal assemblages and the one or two other chaff and weed rich assemblages from the site indicated that this crop was processed at the site, and probably produced in the surrounding fields. There was limited evidence to suggest that some of the crop was autumn, rather than spring, sown and that local sandy soils were cultivated. Barley was also cultivated and



probably free threshing wheat, although the oats and rye were more likely to have been incidental contaminants of the other cereals, the latter being found only in the very rich assemblages from the corn drier. Emmer, which occurred very occasionally in the samples from the early phases of the site, may be a hangover from crops cultivated in the Iron Age. There is perhaps a possibility that barley was more important in the early phases of the site but the data is too poor for confidence. No cultivated pulses were recognised in the charred plant assemblages but this is not unusual since peas and beans are less likely to become charred. A few hazelnut shell fragments are the only other evidence of food plants recorded. A fairly high proportion of malted spelt grain in the samples from the corn drier indicates, at least the possibility, that wheat beer was produced.

## HUMAN BURIALS

The evidence for possible inhumations at Thurnscoe was severely restricted by the absence of bone due to the poor preservational qualities of the acidic soils. However, at least twenty-one 'grave-shaped' features were recognised during excavation. These were predominantly large rectangular pits some 2 m in length and although no bone or metalwork was recovered from them, one such feature did contain possible grave goods in the form of a complete South Yorkshire Late Roman Redware bowl (imitating a Samian form). This item showed heavy signs of pre-depositional abrasion and may have been an heirloom when deposited. The 'grave' from which it was recovered was also the largest of all the pits and had a posthole cut at its foot which may represent a grave marker. These features may suggest a higher status for this possible burial than for the others within the settlement. Many of these features occurred parallel to the enclosure ditches in Phases I–III but in Phase IV a group of seven possible graves, aligned east-west, were clustered in an area apparently defined by shallow gullies. Very few rural sites in Yorkshire have provided evidence of more than isolated burials during the Roman period. Occasional inhumations and cremations have been identified, usually in quite random locations within the settlement (Chadwick 1999). For example at Swaythorpe Farm, East Yorkshire two intercutting inhumations were recorded cut through an infilled corn-drying oven (Mackey 1998). Other known sites include cremations at Pollington and Newington, two burials at Adwick-le-Street, one in a coffin held with iron nails, the other thrown into a shallow grave; and casual burial of four infants in a ditch at Womersley (Buckland 1986).

There is little evidence for a uniform burial tradition on Roman native sites within the region and the group of features which have been interpreted as possible graves forming a small cemetery at Thurnscoe is so far unparalleled within South Yorkshire outside of an urban and military context. At Staunton, Nottinghamshire (Todd 1975) sixteen inhumations in a supine position with arms by their side, mostly on a north-south alignment, were recorded though no comment was made on their distribution pattern. If all of the postulated grave-like features at Thurnscoe were actual graves, of which the cemetery group were the latest, then this change in disposition might be further evidence of the increased Romanisation of the native British population by the late third/fourth century AD.

## CONCLUSION

The excavations at Thurnscoe have identified a rural settlement which was established during the second century AD and gradually changed size, layout and use of space over time until finally being abandoned in the fourth century. There was no evidence of earlier



occupation and the first evidence for post-Roman activity dated to the eleventh or twelfth century.

Despite the absence of occupation layers at Thurnscoe, the total open area excavation of the settlement has produced new information on the organisation of space, the changing layout and development of an enclosure site, the period of occupation and evidence of the local economy. The excavation has highlighted the vastly different activities concentrated in specific areas of the settlement, thus illustrating that without exposing the entire area of the enclosure one might interpret the function of the site as either a settlement, an agricultural processing centre or simply a stock enclosure.

There was a gradual transition in settlement plan as the site evolved and evidence that activities within the site shifted location within the enclosures over time. During Phase I structural evidence was concentrated within the southern enclosure, during Phases II–IV the structural features had been re-located to within the D-shaped eastern enclosure as the settlement tripled in area. The greatest quantity of pottery, suggestive of domestic activity, was also recovered from the D-shaped enclosure. The main economic basis of the site appears to be production of wheat, though the extremely poor preservation of bone means we have no picture of the animal husbandry practised in the settlement. Fragments of quern, and a corn-drying oven which may have been in use throughout the history of the site, illustrate that crop processing was an on-site activity. Evidence for iron smithing was recorded within the southern enclosure in Phase I and may have occurred in other areas in subsequent phases. The pottery assemblage recovered reflected a significant increase in quantity during Phases II and III with some fine-wares and tablewares suggestive of an increase in prosperity appearing during Phase III. This prosperity was also reflected in the recovery of a trumpet brooch, several coins and a horse snaffle bit from Phase III/IV features, largely associated with the area of the eastern D-shaped enclosure. A number of rectangular pits were excavated which have been putatively interpreted as graves. A possible group of seven east-west aligned graves forming a small cemetery suggest burial rites adopted some Roman traditions. During the final phase of occupation the substantial enclosure ditches were infilled, although occupation was still centred within the former D-shaped enclosure and the site was effectively an open settlement until it was abandoned in the fourth century.

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## EVIDENCE FOR EARLY MEDIEVAL ACTIVITY AT BURSEA, EAST YORKSHIRE

By Peter Halkon, Michelle McLean, Martin Millett and David Williams

*Amongst the artefacts from the excavations at Bursea House near Holme-on-Spalding Moor (SE 813317) in 1983–84 was a whetstone which has recently been identified as a Viking-age or later import. The stone was not recognised as such during work on the site report which was published by the Society (Halkon and Millett 1999, 103–64). The purpose of this note is to rectify this omission and draw attention to its importance for the interpretation of the site.*

The whetstone was excavated from a surface deposit (context 604) in Trench A3 overlying Ditch X, part of a first- to second-century AD enclosure (Halkon and Millett 1999, 105–06, illus 5.12 and 5.27). The stratigraphy in this part of the site had been truncated by modern agriculture so the whetstone is unassociated with any archaeological features.

The whetstone (Fig. 1) is 68 mm long (broken) by 14 mm wide and 8 mm thick. It is rectangular in section, dished on both broad faces along its longitudinal axis and roughly rectangular in profile. It appears to be almost complete, with one half of its surface showing signs of having been utilised as a hone. At the complete end there is a possible hole start for suspension, which alternatively may be natural. A comparison with the reference stone collections at the Department of Archaeology, University of Southampton, clearly shows that it is made from a lightish-grey coloured Norwegian Ragstone, a fine-grained metamorphic schist rock, composed of quartz, muscovite and biotite mica, with lesser amounts of chlorite and magnetite (see Moore 1983, fig. 9.2 b). Isotopic and petrological analyses on archaeological examples of whetstones of Norwegian Ragstone

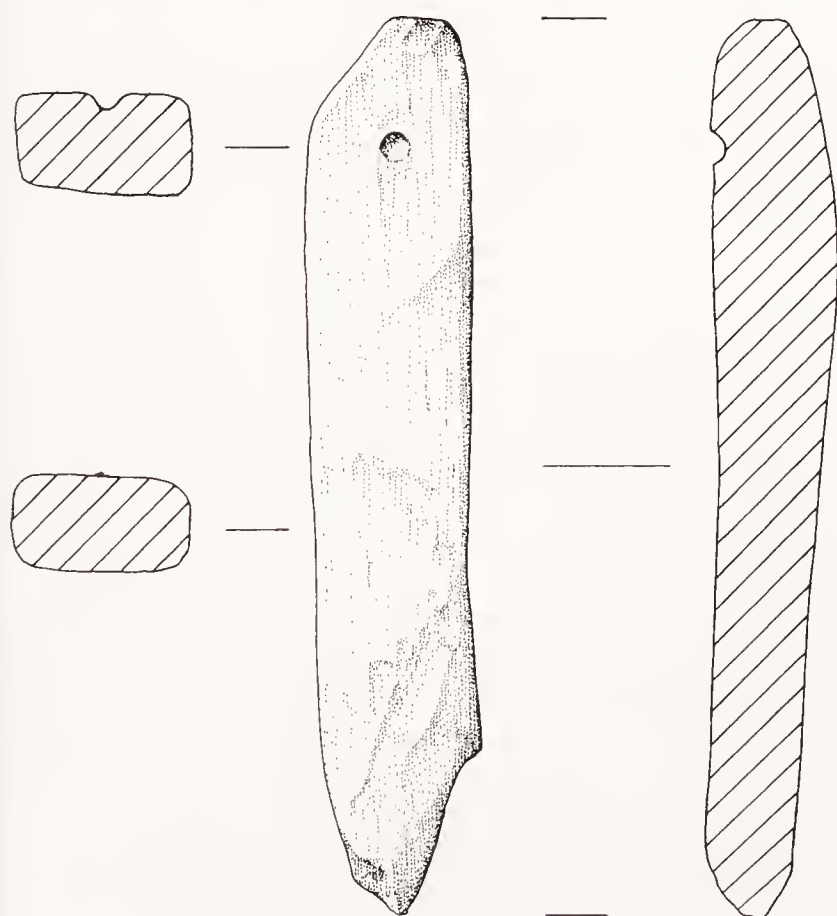


Fig. 1. Scale 1:1.



from England and northern Europe have demonstrated that they were quarried at Eidsborg, Telemark, Central South Norway (Mitchell *et al.* 1984; Crosby and Mitchell 1987).

Norwegian Rag whetstones are commonly found on British sites from the Viking period onwards, initially in those areas of Scandinavian invasion and settlement to the north-east of the Danelaw boundary but over time the distribution widens considerably with Norwegian Rag becoming the most 'widespread' of English Medieval whetstones (Moore 1983, fig. 9.4). Two large collections of whetstones have recently been studied in detail from Ipswich and Winchester. These sites both cover the late Saxon to the post-Medieval period but are widely separated geographically. At Ipswich, Norwegian Rag first appears late in the period *c.* AD 650–850, together with imported whetstones of purple phyllite, with both reaching a peak in roughly equal numbers during the period *c.* AD 1000–1150 (Williams, forthcoming). At Winchester, Norwegian Rag is present in small numbers in the ninth century AD but does not become dominant until the thirteenth century (Ellis and Moore 1990). Purple phyllite whetstones are also present at Winchester but in considerably fewer numbers than at Ipswich (*ibid.*). Ipswich is close to the Scandinavian area of influence and was clearly getting its imported whetstones in greater numbers at an earlier date than Winchester, situated in central southern England. The scale of occurrence of Norwegian Rag whetstones over the country as a whole suggests that they were an important item of trade, either in a finished state or as roughouts to be fashioned at local sites in England.

The presence of this artefact at Bursea House does not in itself provide sufficient evidence for occupation of the site in the early Medieval period; however, the topography of this wet low lying area limits the locations suitable for permanent settlement and the sandy rise on which this site is situated is amongst the best places for habitation available. Equally, the place-name evidence for the site and its environs is suggestive of heavy Scandinavian influence. The place-name 'Bursea' — 'the byre by the lake' (Smith 1937, 235) or on the island (Jensen 1972) and the pre-enclosure field name 'Stockholme', at Bursea, shown on the Enclosure Map for Holme-on-Spalding Moor dated to 1773 (held in the East Riding of Yorkshire Archives Office, Beverley) and the term 'carr' derived from the old Norse 'Kjarr' — a water meadow, all attest to Viking influence (Smith 1937; Jensen 1972).

The recognition of this whetstone as Norwegian Rag provides material evidence to support the place-name evidence providing further weight to the suggestion that that occupation continued at the site from the Roman period onwards into the medieval period (Halkon and Millett 1999, 104, 228).

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## NOT ROMAN, BUT ROMANESQUE: A DECAYED RELIEF AT CONISBROUGH CHURCH

By Rita Wood

*The relief shows a figure seated under a round-headed arch. It resembles Romano-British monuments, but several features link it to twelfth-century sculpture in Yorkshire and to examples at sites further afield with Cluniac connections. A Romanesque context for the relief is suggested. A postscript considers the relationship of some Romanesque stone sculpture in the county to contemporary work in wood.*

### HISTORY AND CONDITION OF THE PIECE

St Peter's, Conisbrough is a large church having notable Anglo-Saxon fabric, twelfth-century arcades and later medieval windows, battlements and pinnacles. All this has undergone several thorough restorations. The decayed relief which is the subject of this paper is set inside the porch on the east wall. This single stone is much more decayed than the surrounding walling, and how long it has been in this position, or where it came from, is not known (Figs 1, 2). The round-headed south doorway to one side of it has crocketed capitals, arches with angled chevrons and a keeled roll moulding, then a label with single pierced dogtooth arranged along a hollow chamfer. This doorway would date from the end of the twelfth century, perhaps a little later than the west doorway and north porch at Selby Abbey, for example. The pointed outer archway of the porch was almost entirely renewed in the 1914 restoration, it has keeled rolls and dogtooth as well as an angled billet moulding and its capitals are plain and concave with a square abacus: the model for this archway could even have been early thirteenth century. The line of the porch walls may be fifteenth-century, as indicated on Peter Ryder's plan,<sup>1</sup> but the porch as a whole 'is so renewed that it can no longer be trusted', according to Professor Pevsner.<sup>2</sup> The confusion of its fabric is exemplified by the inscribed slab in the wall below the relief, which is of the fifteenth century.

Joseph Hunter saw the church in the 1820s, but he does not record seeing the relief. Describing the monuments, he mentions 'a much mutilated statue of a knight [which] may represent one of the Vescis, or some early seneschal or constable of the castle.' This damaged figure or effigy must have been lost since his visit: the draped and seated figure in the relief would hardly have evoked an armed knight, and if Hunter had been describing the relief, he would surely have mentioned the arched surround and the niche. Hunter also says that there was 'at the east end of the south aisle. . . on the floor a flag, on which is carved in a bold and masterly manner a scroll, as if thrown at random on the ground. There is an inscription on it. . .'. This must be the slab now set beneath the relief in the east wall of the porch.<sup>3</sup> Sir Stephen Glynne, who visited the church in 1853, mentions neither the relief nor the inscribed slab.<sup>4</sup> James Raine saw the church 'amid the mists of

<sup>1</sup> P. F. Ryder, *Saxon Churches in South Yorkshire* (1982) South Yorkshire County Archaeology Monograph No. 2, plan on p. 46; see also P. F. Ryder, 'St Peter's Church, Conisbrough' *Archaeological Journal*, 137, (1980), Proceedings, pp. 407–15.

<sup>2</sup> N. Pevsner, *Yorkshire: the West Riding*, 2nd. ed. rev. E. Radcliffe, (Harmondsworth, 1967), p. 167.

<sup>3</sup> J. Hunter, *The History and Topography of the Deanery of Doncaster*, 1, (London, 1828), pp. 119–22.

<sup>4</sup> S. Glynne, 'Notes on Yorkshire Churches', *YAJ* 14, pp. 337–39.





Fig. 1. The Conisbrough relief  
photographed in 1979. Copyright, South  
Yorkshire Archaeology Service.



Fig. 2. The relief photographed in 2001.  
Copyright, John McElheran.



a March morning when a great portion of it was almost level with the ground'. This was in 1866, during the Victorian restoration when much of the north side of the church was demolished, old woodwork removed and floor levels raised. He could assess only the tower, the south porch and the south side of the nave with its clerestory. He also does not mention the relief.<sup>5</sup>

The earliest mention so far found is in the *Little Guide* published in 1911, at the end of a list of objects to see at the church: '(13) Built into E. interior of porch — seated figure — possibly Norm.'<sup>6</sup> It may therefore be to the much-criticised Victorian restoration that we owe the discovery and preservation of the relief. The porch was substantially renewed in 1914 but there is no mention of the relief at that time.<sup>7</sup> One of the best photographs of it so far found is that reproduced as Fig. 1,<sup>8</sup> and a second is from an unidentified published source.<sup>9</sup> Three informative photographs taken in 1964 by Kit Galbraith are in the Conway Library of the Courtauld Institute of Art.<sup>10</sup> From the viewpoints and details chosen by her, it seems that she also thought the piece Romanesque.

The relief is in Magnesian limestone. It is 0.59 m wide, 0.74 m high and excavated to a maximum depth of 0.13 m. Within a round-headed alcove which has a flat back, a figure is seated on a bench. As well as suffering general abrasion, breakage has occurred. Chemical decay is general, and progressive. It is not easy to read the position of the hands and arms or what they were holding, nor to be certain that the clothing was entirely classical in style. Recent losses on the head will be noticed by comparing Figs 1 and 2, these are over the surface generally, and of the right cheek. Indications of the folds of drapery survive about the legs and hem, and here it can be seen that the carving was careful but never bold. This was not the work of an untrained hand but neither was it by a master.

## THE ROMAN QUESTION

Ryder says that 'Although several authorities have described this as Norman work, the design has stylistic affinities closer to Romano-British carving'.<sup>11</sup> Pevsner does not suggest a period.<sup>12</sup> The relief was seen briefly by members of the Royal Archaeological Institute on a site visit in 1980 and it was accepted as Romano-British on that occasion.<sup>13</sup> Despite the implications which a Roman date would have for local archaeology, no further interest has been taken from that quarter and the piece is not mentioned in the relevant volume of the *Corpus Signorum Imperii Romani*. Romano-British parallels are certainly striking, but they do not really amount to more than the similarities to be expected when one style has consciously based itself on another.<sup>14</sup> This would not be a typical funerary monument of the Roman period in this area because, for example, it is in limestone and not sandstone, the figure does not face straight forwards and there is no back to the seat.

<sup>5</sup> J. Raine, 'On some early monuments at Conisborough [sic]', *Assoc. Archit. Soc. R. & P.* 9, (1867), pp. 69–74.

<sup>6</sup> J. Morris, *The West Riding of Yorkshire* (London, 1911), p. 162.

<sup>7</sup> See Doncaster Archives Local Studies Library, Balby, Doncaster for documents relating to the 1913–14 restoration, P7/3/E1–3.

<sup>8</sup> South Yorkshire Archaeology Service, Howden House, Sheffield. SMR 00201/01. Photograph taken in 1979.

<sup>9</sup> Photographic Collection, Local Studies Library, Surrey Street, Sheffield. C4.2/3 (two copies).

<sup>10</sup> Photographs taken in 1964, Courtauld Institute negatives 353/66 (13–15).

<sup>11</sup> Ryder, *Saxon Churches*, p. 60.

<sup>12</sup> Pevsner, *West Riding*, p. 167.

<sup>13</sup> Information from Dr David Hey.

<sup>14</sup> J. M. C. Toynbee, *Art in Roman Britain* (London, 1962), pls. 84–86; S. R. Tufi, *C. S. I. R.*, 1, fasc. 3, Yorkshire, (Oxford 1983), items 26, 44, 57.



The figure here is not passive: an impression of movement is given by the angle of back and legs and the turn of the head to look upwards and outside the frame. These anomalies become positive features once the later period is accepted. The fact that the Roman attribution has been so attractive to scholars is a measure of the success of the Romanesque sculptor, who not only borrowed the round arch, but was attempting to work in a classical style. Evidence will now be presented to locate the sculpture in a twelfth century context.

### COMPARISONS WITH ROMANESQUE FIGURE SCULPTURE

Before 1066, the manor of Conisbrough had belonged to King Harold, and it was the chief place of the large Honour of Conisbrough given by the Conqueror to his son-in-law William de Warenne. The local limestone not only formed the strategic hill-top site for the castle, but was to provide the fabric for the well-preserved and beautiful donjon, and later for the curtain walls of the bailey. The church of Conisbrough was likewise a regional focus, having been a minster church before the Conquest. At some time before 1121, this church and its daughter-churches were given by the second William de Warenne to his foundation at Lewes priory, the first Cluniac Benedictine house in England. One of the dependent churches of Conisbrough was that at Fishlake, where the south doorway includes sculpture that resembles Roman work of fine quality.<sup>15</sup> It has been suggested that the doorway at Fishlake was the work of a team made up largely of craftsmen who had arrived in the area from the south-west Midlands, and that their leader had designed the scheme for the south porch at Malmesbury Abbey, Wiltshire.<sup>16</sup> It is at Malmesbury, not anywhere else in Yorkshire, that a close comparison for the bench on which the Conisbrough figure sits is to be found (Fig. 3). Even the sloping floor in front of the bench is present at both sites. This slope, which is often seen in ivories and wood carvings, might reproduce the conventional perspective of two-dimensional drawings, but it could have a practical use in the stone carvings, enabling the complete figure to be visible from below.<sup>17</sup>

A feature of the relief often remarked upon is the large head of the figure. If a medieval date is favoured, this is explained as a saint's halo or a woman's mantle: if Roman, as a female hair style. There is another possibility, that it follows a Cluniac convention in which the heads of figures are disproportionately enlarged. The large heads are seen, for example, at churches on the way to Compostella and on the lavabo from Wenlock Priory, Shropshire (Fig. 4). There are other styles which give a large head to figures, but the Cluniac connection would be relevant at Conisbrough.

Even in the present decayed state, it is obvious that the head is turned upwards and to its right (our left). Fig. 1 suggests the division of the large head into two lesser volumes, and, although the facial features are now almost gone, this can still be recognised in certain lights. This division, along the line of a moustache, is characteristic of men's heads in Romanesque drawings.

An interesting comparison, though inevitably a subjective one because of decay, is with sculpture at Nun Monkton, Yorkshire. The lower stage of the west façade at this church is dated to about 1175–80 by Pevsner and includes a life-size free-standing figure of a woman and a fragment of another (Figs 5, 6).<sup>18</sup> Comparison suggests that the same

<sup>15</sup> R. Wood, 'The Romanesque Doorway at Fishlake', *YAJ* 72, (2000), figs 7, 14, 16 left.

<sup>16</sup> R. Wood, 'Malmesbury Abbey: The Sculpture of the South Entrance', *Wilts. Archaeol. & Nat. Hist. Magazine*, 91, (1998), pp. 53–56.

<sup>17</sup> G. Zarnecki, *The Monastic Achievement* (London, 1972), illus. 47; Wood, *WANHM*, 91, p. 52; F. Mercier, *Les Primitifs Français: la peinture Clunysienne en Bourgogne à l'époque Romane* (Paris, 1931), p. 49.

<sup>18</sup> Pevsner, *West Riding*, p. 383.





Fig. 3. (above) Malmesbury Abbey, west lunette in south porch: St Peter, and an apostle with a scroll. Copyright, Conway Library, Courtauld Institute of Art.



Fig. 4. Wenlock Priory: panel on the *lavabo* showing large-headed figures. Copyright, T. A. Heslop.





Fig. 5. Nun Monkton: the head of the female statue. John McElheran for the *Corpus of Romanesque Sculpture in Britain and Ireland*.

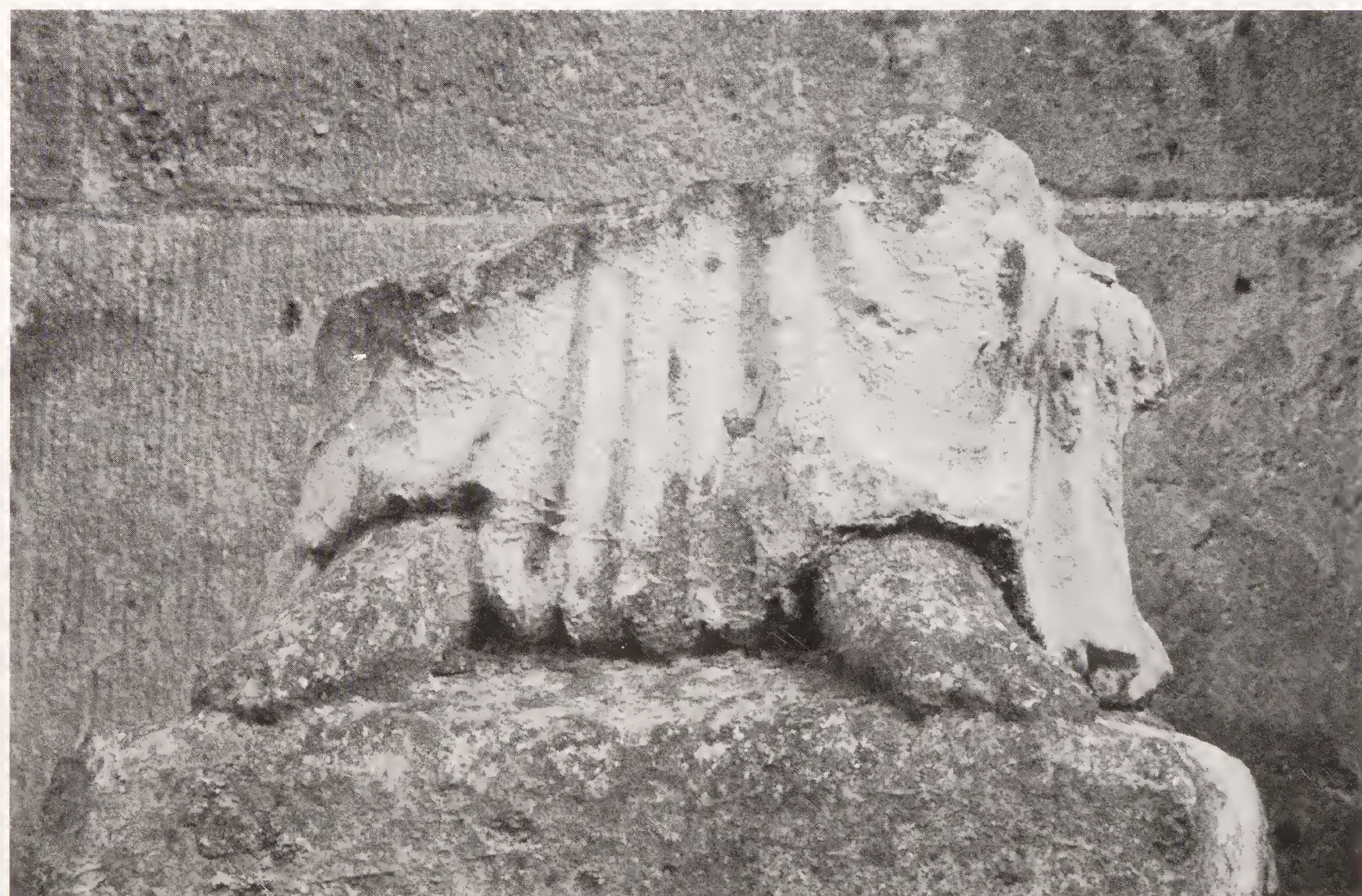


Fig. 6. (below) Nun Monkton: feet and drapery of a fragmentary statue. John McElheran for the *Corpus of Romanesque Sculpture in Britain and Ireland*.





Fig. 7. The relief at Conisbrough: feet and drapery. Copyright, John McElheran.

workman could have made both these and the Conisbrough relief. The most insistent clue is that the female head at Nun Monkton has prominent eyes, as in Fig. 1. Other similarities suggest themselves such as the weakness of the shoulder-line and of the hands, and the shallow treatment of the drapery. The Nun Monkton fragment has a looped, tubular fold at the hem-line which is also present at Conisbrough (Figs 6, 1). The feet in the fragment and the relief are similarly tapering and weak (Figs 2, 6, 7). An obvious difference is that the Nun Monkton statues are free-standing whereas the relief at Conisbrough is firmly attached to its background (Fig. 2): if the craftsman were the same man, the relief was made much earlier in his career, and following a different model. The female figure at Nun Monkton has already been linked to the statue of 'Sheba' at York Minster.<sup>19</sup> In the Minster figure the scroll also begins to stand free, and 'Sheba' would thus represent a third stage in this craftsman's developing confidence.

The alertness of the seated figure at Conisbrough is conveyed by the turn of the head sideways and upwards together with the inclination of the body backwards into the right side of the alcove. This movement is stabilised by the placing of the figure's left toes at the bottom of the slab, and balanced by the right foot being raised (Fig. 7). A similar pose is held by an apostle in a Cluny lectionary of 1110–20.<sup>20</sup> In sculpture dating from the 1150s, the same upward turn of the head occurs at Malmesbury (Fig. 8) and at Riccall, Yorkshire (Fig. 9). The figure is identifiable at both those sites as St Paul.

<sup>19</sup> S. Oosterwijk, 'York Minster', in C. Norton, *et al.*, *Romanesque Stone Sculpture from Medieval England* (Leeds, 1993), pp. 50–54. The statue is presently on display in the Minster Treasury.

<sup>20</sup> M. Kauffmann, *Romanesque Manuscripts, 1066–1190* (London, 1975), illus. 14; the feet of an apostle are without shoes following Matt. 10:10.





Fig. 8. Malmesbury Abbey, east lunette in south porch: St Paul. Copyright, Warburg Institute.



Fig. 9. Riccall doorway: St Paul.

### COMPARISONS WITH ROMANESQUE ARCHITECTURAL FORMS

The niche has a shouldered arch, but of imperfect form. The shouldered arch is not common, however the Riccall capital (Fig. 9) includes a shouldered moulding with a firm horizontal base-line and a satisfying arch. At Brayton, the doorway has capitals with a series of four standing figures under hanging arches, boldly handled (Fig. 10). In contrast to these contemporary local examples, the Conisbrough craftsman has given us an uncertain structure. The treatment suggests that he was translating directly into three dimensions from a drawing, or was working in the style of a wood or ivory plaque. The shouldered niche is completed with a pair of slender columns, capitals and bases. The old published photograph<sup>21</sup> hints at fluted vertical forms in both capitals. These forms are not waterleaf, but reminiscent of something earlier, perhaps narrow upright leaves. The capitals of the crossing at Campsall have various upright leaf patterns which would suit the forms seen in the old photograph.

<sup>21</sup> The photograph in Sheffield Local Studies Library, see note 9.





Fig. 10. Brayton doorway: figure with scroll. John McElheran for the *Corpus of Romanesque Sculpture in Britain and Ireland*.



Fig. 11. Reconstruction of the Conisbrough relief using Figure 1 as a base.



The deep flat-backed niche seen at Conisbrough, a single unit intended for sculpture, is not common in Yorkshire. Some sort of niche has been postulated as a setting for those statues including 'Sheba' which survive from the late Romanesque façade of York Minster, but nothing of their form is known.<sup>22</sup> The concave niches at St Margaret's, Walmgate, York, would seem to have been designed when the doorway was reset after the Civil War, being inserted between the first and second orders of the original doorway: they are very comparable to niches of the seventeenth century at St William's college.<sup>23</sup> The tower at Campsall has flat-backed blank arcades reminiscent of towers at Malmesbury and even Cluny III, but there is no suggestion that sculpture was ever placed in those. However, four flat-backed niches were prepared for the free-standing figures at Nun Monkton. These niches have waterleaf capitals and are part of the Transitional architecture of the lowest level of the façade.

### A RECONSTRUCTION OF THE RELIEF (Fig. 11)

The most difficult area to reconstruct is the damaged upper body and whatever it was that the figure held. It is the prominent horizontal form here which reinforced the opinion that the relief was Roman, for it suggests a dish or tray with an offering.<sup>24</sup> The twelfth-century figures at Brayton hold simple attributes — open books, a staff, keys, and a scroll (Fig. 10). The reconstruction shows the Conisbrough figure holding a scroll, and the evidence for that is as follows. The figure's left hand and arm are unbroken and, although worn, are still readable. Looking down on the hand from above, there is the suggestion of the left thumb opening out towards the chest so that the hand was gripping something approximately vertical, which is reconstructed as a roll or a scroll-box. The right forearm of the figure is upright, but the hand is missing, broken off at the wrist (Figs 1, 2). The missing hand has been reconstructed raised as at Riccall (Fig. 9). To match the left, this hand is quite small, but appears especially so because of the large head. An important survival on the relief is the free end of the scroll, this is a flat spiral in the vertical plane, just below and in front of the broken right wrist. The early photograph shows it well (Fig. 1), and the spiral can still be found in the carving but is difficult to capture adequately on film. Between the spiral and the surviving left hand is the roughly horizontal area of damaged stone across the chest, which is now suggested to be a 'bridge' that was retained behind the open scroll. The horizontal scroll in the reconstruction should be compared with that in Fig. 10, which is held in the figure's right hand and rises freely towards the opposite shoulder before ending in a spiral.

The unsupported open scroll is common in illuminations, its firm, free line no doubt meant to suggest that the word it carried also had a life of its own. An open scroll not only bore an appropriate text but it would often be positioned to enhance the effect of the whole design. Thus, two unsupported open scrolls are carved in the lunettes at Malmesbury, one held by an angel and the other by an apostle, and their oddity adds a touch of 'otherness' which helps lift the scene just out of this world (Fig. 3). At Conisbrough, by contrast, the scroll was cautiously arranged to lie straight across the body and does not project beyond it. The short, straight scroll in the carving contrasts with the same subject in illuminations.<sup>25</sup> The flat spiral at the free end of the scroll has its origin in classical and Byzantine models. It is found in a variety of medieval illumi-

<sup>22</sup> C. Norton, 'The Stone which the Builders rejected. . .' in Norton, *Romanesque Stone Sculpture*, pp. 14–17.

<sup>23</sup> Pevsner, N., *Yorkshire: York and the East Riding*, 1st ed., (Harmondsworth, 1967), pl. 63.

<sup>24</sup> For example, Toynbee, *Art in Roman Britain*, fig. 84.

<sup>25</sup> Kauffmann, *Romanesque Manuscripts*, figs 287, 289 show St Paul with a scroll.



nations, for example the Lindisfarne Gospels and the Winchester Bible,<sup>26</sup> but is not very common in the West. Perhaps the most pertinent comparison would be with the *rotuli* held by both Christ and St Paul in the apse fresco at Berzé-la-Ville near Cluny, although in this case the spirals are at the ends held in the hand.<sup>27</sup> By the twelfth century the codex or book was the norm and the actual use of scrolls for writing sacred texts was probably limited to the Exultet rolls: by then the scroll could symbolise authoritative tradition, and was particularly suitable for St Paul.

Further details of the reconstruction could be justified from contemporary parallels: Cluniac figures of saints are often without haloes, as at Wenlock priory (Fig. 4) and St Paul is conventionally shown as balding, but with full hair at the sides of the head.<sup>28</sup> The reconstruction has a thoroughly Romanesque character. The model for the figure could easily have been a Cluniac manuscript drawing, placed in a niche derived from Roman architecture.

## DATE, AND RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER WORKS

The soft folds at the lower hem swamping the feet can be an almost Gothic feature,<sup>29</sup> but as direct influence from French sources is postulated, there is no need for the relief to be dated late in the twelfth century. Rather, because of the numerous comparisons made with mid-century works of the Yorkshire School, and to allow for the later work at Nun Monkton, a tentative date for the relief would be in the mid to late 1150s. It would thus date from about the same time as the Warenne memorial inside the church, and is likely to have been made under the direction of the same Cluniac monk.<sup>30</sup> It is fitting that Cluny should be connected with work on the fabric of the church itself for, after Pontefract priory, this was the building which would have been of most importance to Cluniacs in the area.

A probable sequence of works by this designer in Yorkshire has been set out before, but can now be refined at several points. It has been suggested that the improvements at the east end and provision of a west doorway at Pontefract priory had brought the designer and his associates to Yorkshire. The Warenne memorial, followed by the St Paul relief, at Conisbrough, and then the south doorway at Fishlake, seem a logical sequence. A designer, of course, can have several ideas under construction simultaneously, and this may partly account for the fact that the carvings are not consistently by one master sculptor. After Conisbrough and Fishlake, the complex Petrine design for a doorway at Bishop Wilton — where the archbishop had an estate — must be his. That commission for the archbishop would make the Cluniac a strong candidate to have designed the postulated late Romanesque west facade for York Minster which has already been mentioned. He was highly-skilled — locally without parallel so far as we can tell — and tailored his designs to the client or site, it was no barrier at all that he was a Cluniac. It is not envisaged that he was directly responsible for designs at any other of the Yorkshire sites mentioned in this paper, in particular there is not enough remaining at Nun Monkton to uncover any theme for the four figures originally there. The developments at Campsall church in this period, and at nearby Kirk Bramwith, would seem to be due to an architect or builder from the original team, not the designer. Both those sites have pointed arches

<sup>26</sup> C. Nordenfalk, *Celtic and Anglo-Saxon Painting* (London, 1977), pl. 21; O. Pächt, *Book Illumination in the Middle Ages* (London, 1986), fig. 142.

<sup>27</sup> Mereier, *Les Primitifs Français*, pls XIII, LXII.

<sup>28</sup> D. Park, 'The "Lewes Group" of Wall Paintings in Sussex', *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 6, (1984), pl. 3; H. Swarzenski, *Monuments of Romanesque Art: the Church Treasures of Northern Europe* (London, 1967), illus 443–45.

<sup>29</sup> *The Year 1200*, 2, A Background Survey, ed. K. Hoffmann & F. Deuchler, (New York, 1970), illus 47–67.

<sup>30</sup> R. Wood, 'The Romanesque Memorial at Conisbrough', *IAJ* 73, (2001), pp. 41–60.



with chevron pattern, comparable to the nave arcades at Malmesbury Abbey; similarly, Conisbrough church has multi-scalloped capitals in the north arcade which are rare in Yorkshire but common in buildings in the southwest.

It has just been asserted that this experienced and versatile designer provided complex schemes for the two Cluniac priories with local interests (Pontefract and Lewes), for the countess Isabella and for the archbishop of York. In such a list, Fishlake seems somewhat out of place. There is little in the historical record to suggest why the rubble-walled church at this small village on the edge of the Humber marshes was given 'the most lavishly decorated (doorway) in Yorkshire' as Pevsner justly describes it — unless, that is, the story of St Cuthbert's remains having rested there was already believed — and Fishlake had an image of St Cuthbert in 1379, before the church belonged to Durham.<sup>31</sup> In the twelfth century, a development of the Cuthbert legend by Symeon of Durham stated that women should not enter the churches where his body had rested.<sup>32</sup> These two beliefs, together with the very isolation of the site, could have led to Fishlake having a special relevance for the local Cluniacs, perhaps as a retreat like Berzé-la-Ville. Monastic use of the church would account for the unusual subjects depicted in the third order of the doorway, some of which are admonitory of the priesthood and, conversely, are not appropriate to laymen,<sup>33</sup> also of the depiction on a capital of the apostles as monks, as at Lewes Priory. A rector is documented c.1180–85, but this would not necessarily imply a parochial function for the building.<sup>34</sup> On the other hand, the enamel plaque with the eagle of St John found in the church in the 1850s, dateable to c.1200–20 and now at Doncaster Museum, is not sufficiently rare a find to distinguish the furnishings at Fishlake from many others in England at this time.

#### A SUGGESTED DISPLAY TO INCLUDE THE CONISBROUGH RELIEF

It is time to consider the architectural function of the relief — for although a slight thing in itself, it was part of a larger grouping. The turn of the figure and the fact that he sits on one end of a bench imply the existence of at least two other units in the design: a central subject on which the gaze of St Paul is understood to be fixed and a corresponding figure and niche to the left of that. There is no need for more components than three and, as no other remnants have come to light, perhaps three units is all that there were. A fragmentary three-part scheme of Christ, St Peter and St Paul is known from Lincoln cathedral.<sup>35</sup> There are examples surviving *in situ* on the continent, for example at Andlau in Alsace and at churches on the pilgrimage routes.<sup>36</sup> This is a routine design compared to the others left us by the Cluniac, however, if its making was indeed contemporary with the making of the memorial, the interest and the funds of the de Warennes were already committed, and less wealthy donors would have had to be approached. The Cluniac himself was probably already involved with the intricate design for Fishlake, and that is another reason for this work being a relatively simple one.

The context in which these three units were set is most likely that of the main doorway. The only other real possibility is that they were inside the church on the east wall of the

<sup>31</sup> Pevsner, *West Riding*, p. 201; Wood, *YAJ* 72, p. 20; *Fasti Parochiales* I, ed. S. A. Hamilton Thompson, & C. T. Clay, *YAS Record Series*, 85, (Wakefield, 1933), pp. 114, 115, and 119, n.5.

<sup>32</sup> W. M. Aird, *St Cuthbert and the Normans* (Woodbridge, 1998), p. 125; V. Tudor, 'The Misogyny of St Cuthbert' *Archaeol. Aeliana*, 12 (1984), pp. 157–67.

<sup>33</sup> Wood, *YAJ* 72, pp. 31–35.

<sup>34</sup> Hamilton Thompson & Clay 1933, as note 32, p. 115.

<sup>35</sup> G. Zarnecki, *Romanesque Sculpture at Lincoln Cathedral* (London, 1964), pls 18, 19a, 20a; Zarnecki, *English Romanesque Art 1066–1200*, pp. 180, 190–91; B. Heywood in Norton, *Romanesque Stone Sculpture*, pp. 66–67.

<sup>36</sup> A. K. Porter, *Romanesque Sculpture of the Pilgrimage Roads* (New York, 1965, first published Boston, 1923), 1, pl. 3; 2, pls. 549, 550; 3, pls. 1287, 1288.



nave. There are wall paintings which include Christ, St Peter and St Paul on the east wall of the nave at Clayton and Coombes, Sussex;<sup>37</sup> there is sculpture in alcoves in the same position at Halford, Warwickshire, and there are empty niches either side of the chancel arch at Knighton-on-Teme, Worcestershire, and at Heythrop, Oxfordshire.<sup>38</sup> However, nothing like these is known in Yorkshire, and the local parallels already noted for the Conisbrough relief are all at entrances. The position of the main entrance to Conisbrough church in the mid-twelfth century is not known: Ryder's reconstruction of the Saxon church *c.*1000<sup>39</sup> shows a doorway in the south wall of the tower; and that of the church *c.*1200<sup>40</sup> shows a doorway in the south wall of a south aisle. According to the estimates of Pevsner<sup>41</sup> and Ryder,<sup>42</sup> the arcade was cut in the Saxon nave wall some time between 1175 and 1200. The three-part display has been suggested above to date from the late 1150s and must predate the cutting of the arcade. The display is therefore likely to have been made for an entrance still in its pre-Conquest form.

Seven miles from Conisbrough, at Laughton-en-le-Morthen, a tall pre-Conquest doorway was partially blocked at some time in the middle ages, possibly in the twelfth century.<sup>43</sup> The setting which will now be suggested for the Conisbrough relief could have been designed to mask a tall Saxon opening and its bordering lesenes. At Pontefract priory, Askham Bryan and various other churches in Yorkshire, when a sculptured doorway was added, it was often abutted onto an existing wall. The pediment thus constructed might be thick and solid enough to accommodate a doorway of as much as five orders. At Conisbrough, however, just one new layer of stone would have been enough to disguise the old entrance and give an adequate depth for niches. It is therefore suggested that a false gable was positioned over the existing entrance to the church; that this had a niche to the left with St Peter and to the right with St Paul, and that in the centre there would have been a figure or a symbol of Christ. This central image could have been either in a third niche or, perhaps more likely if there was a tall opening to fill, in a tympanum. Entrances with a seated figure above the doorway exist at several sites in England.<sup>44</sup> At Malmesbury, the tympanum over the door has a small figure of Christ enthroned, but a tympanum more often contained a symbol of Christ — an equal-armed cross or the *Agnus Dei* — rather than a figure.

The carving of St Peter balancing that of St Paul may have been bare-headed and in robes derived from classical art, as at Malmesbury Abbey (Fig. 3) and at Riccall. However, at Bishop Wilton and Barton-le-Street, a figure dressed as a contemporary bishop might signify St Peter. From Ivychurch Priory, Wiltshire, there survive reliefs of St Peter wearing mitre and pallium and St Paul in medieval robes.<sup>45</sup> The setting for these figures is unknown, but the reverse of the St Peter has an abandoned carving with the beginnings of an equal-armed cross: perhaps the two figures were placed either side of such a cross. A tympanum formerly existing at Tetsworth, Oxfordshire, showed the *Agnus Dei* in a

<sup>37</sup>. Park in *Anglo-Norman Studies* 6, pl. 3.

<sup>38</sup>. D. Kahn, 'The Romanesque Sculpture of the Church of St Mary at Halford, Warwickshire' *JBAA*, 133, (1980), pp. 64–73.

<sup>39</sup>. Ryder, *Saxon Churches*, p. 56, top.

<sup>40</sup>. Ryder, *Saxon Churches*, p. 56, bottom.

<sup>41</sup>. Pevsner, *West Riding*, pp. 166–67.

<sup>42</sup>. Ryder, *Saxon Churches*, pp. 53–54.

<sup>43</sup>. H. M. & J. Taylor, *Anglo-Saxon Architecture* (Cambridge, 1965), 1, 373–76; 2, figs 169, 514.

<sup>44</sup>. J. Bilson 'Newbald Church', *YAJ*, 21 (1910–11), pp. 1–44, fig. 19 (a local example but restored); N. Pevsner and B. Wilson, *Norfolk 2: North-West and South* (2nd ed. Harmondsworth, 1999), Haddiscoe, pl. 15; N. Pevsner, *Worcestershire* (Harmondsworth, 1968), Rous Lench, pl. 15.

<sup>45</sup>. Zarnecki, *English Romanesque Art 1066–1200*, pp. 190–91; T. Cocke, *et al.*, *Churches of South-East Wiltshire* (London, 1987), p. 19.





Fig. 12. The Tetsworth tympanum as illustrated in *Archaeologia* (1853). Copyright, Society of Antiquaries of London.

circular aureole, flanked by a bishop with mitre and crosier and a man with a book (Fig. 12).<sup>46</sup> They thus resemble the Ivychurch reliefs, and probably also represent Peter and Paul. It is unlikely that the tympanum was in quite such perfect condition as the precision of the published engraving suggests. The tonsure of the man on the right could have been redrawn over a balding head, and the hand which Benjamin Williams says 'points to the Paschal Lamb' perhaps passed in front of the aureole, as the crosier on the opposite side does. It could have been raised to the heavenly vision as at Riccall (Fig. 9).

Some thirty or forty years after its construction, the somewhat makeshift entrance postulated for Conisbrough would have been made redundant by the extension of a south aisle and the necessity for a totally new doorway and porch. This entrance in its turn was moved, but reused, as the aisle is thought to have been widened in the fourteenth or fifteenth century: it is represented by the south entrance, a modern reconstruction.<sup>47</sup> There would have been few enough sculptured stones in the original scheme and, after such a history, it is perhaps surprising that anything has been found at all.

### POSTSCRIPT: THE SCULPTOR

Features of the figure in the niche, chiefly the prominent eyes, the weak shoulders and the general reticence, have enabled the Conisbrough relief to be linked to sculpture at Nun Monkton and York Minster, leading to the suggestion that the figures were by the same man over a period of some fifteen to twenty years. The connection is based on personal observation, so some of what follows in this postscript is hypothetical. The further speculation advanced here is that these works — severally or together — demonstrate an experienced wood-carver working in stone. This is a situation with wider implications.

<sup>46</sup> B. Williams, a Letter to the President, *Archaeologia*, 35, (1853), p. 487, pl. xx.

<sup>47</sup> Ryder, *Saxon Churches*, p. 54.



M. F. Hearn notes that the great artworks of the Carolingian and early medieval period were not in stone but in gold, silver, bronze, stucco or wood.<sup>48</sup> A focal point in any church would have been the Crucifixion scene at the chancel arch or the patron saint's image somewhere at the east end, and these impressive figures were made of wood, even if that was clad in plaster, gold leaf and jewels. The craftsman who specialised in such figures was not an optional minor character, nor the local carpenter, but he might be a top quality creative artist. When, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, monumental stone sculpture was in demand, Hearn reasons that it was the established crafts such as goldwork and woodcarving which must have supplied the men capable of making it. Similarly, Geneviève Micheli thought that chip-carving had been taken directly into Norman sculpture by wood-carvers drawn to work in the new medium.<sup>49</sup> In an essay exploring the date of the Chichester reliefs, George Zarnecki illustrates the same subject in several media — illumination, wood and stone — in order to establish a range of dates within which it becomes reasonable to place the reliefs.<sup>50</sup> Though Zarnecki does not digress from his main point to discuss it, his illustrations suggest not just the prevalence of a particular artistic fashion in a definable period, but the practical possibility that craftsmen worked in more than one medium.

The Conisbrough relief, the figures from Nun Monkton and the Minster all have features typical of woodcarving. These are best appreciated in the later pieces, but are not absent from the relief. If the standing figures at Nun Monkton and the Minster are compared with those from St Mary's Abbey now in the Yorkshire Museum, their relative delicacy and restraint are obvious.<sup>51</sup> They are not in the general line of development towards Gothic sculpture which hindsight encourages us to expect: rather, they may be seen as belonging to a long tradition of wooden figure-carving then alive in England but now only evident on the continent.<sup>52</sup> The celebrated column figures at Chartres also mirror contemporary wooden forms and not Roman stone sculpture.

The smoothness and simplicity of the drapery especially in the standing figures from Nun Monkton and the Minster is characteristic of early-medieval wood-carving. Wood, indoors, relied on paint for definition: stone took the sun and benefited from deeper carving. The finely-grooved hair of the woman at Nun Monkton, and the monotonous feet of the Minster figures could find their equal in contemporary wood sculpture. Sophie Oosterwijk remarks that the legs of the Minster figures are 'virtually immobile' — might we say, 'wooden'? She notes that the clothing usually ends just above the feet in the Minster figures in contrast to the way fabric is bundled round and between the feet of the figures from the Abbey. She sees the turn and tilt of the heads of several of the figures as demanded by the context, and not as a liveliness natural to the sculptor.<sup>53</sup>

In the seated figure on the Conisbrough relief, such features of woodcarving are not obvious, chiefly because the sculptor seems to have been directed to work from a drawing like that cited in the Cluny lectionary. However, the brevity of the scroll and the retention of bridges behind the scroll and the head suggest a craftsman who was uncertain what stresses stone could stand, and habitually wary of the grain of the wood when any free-standing or projecting parts were required. Apart from the continental crucifix figures

<sup>48</sup> M. F. Hearn, *Romanesque Sculpture: the revival of Monumental Stone Sculpture in the 11th and 12th centuries* (Oxford, 1981), pp. 34-40, 94-95.

<sup>49</sup> G. Micheli, *Le décor géométrique dans la sculpture de l'Aisne et de l'Oise au Xie. siècle*, (Paris, 1939), pp. 74-77.

<sup>50</sup> G. Zarnecki, 'The Chichester Reliefs', *Archaeol. J.*, 110 (1953), pp. 106-19; pls. xxvi(b) and xxvii.

<sup>51</sup> Illus in Norton, *Romanesque Stone Sculpture*, pp. 24-25; 57-60.

<sup>52</sup> G. Zarnecki in *English Romanesque Art 1066-1200* (London, 1984), p. 160, item 115; A. Legner, *Romanische Kunst in Deutschland* (Munich, 1999), fig. 27, pls 253-59; M. Durliat, *L'Art Roman*, (Paris, 1982), pls. 72, 79, 82; A. Tuulse, *Romansk Kunst i Norden* (Stockholm, 1968), figs 178-80, 204.

<sup>53</sup> Oosterwijk, in Norton, *Romanesque Stone Sculpture*, pp. 53-54.



already mentioned, the most famous survival of early medieval woodcarving must be the doors in St Maria im Kapitol, Cologne. Here is a series of plaques which show scenes of action with figures of apparently fully-rounded form. However, when viewed from the side, a consistent and careful provision of supports can be observed. Often the support consists of the piling up of one figure against another, or against a halo, mantle or building, but there are also instances, as behind the crowned head of Herod, where non-realistic bridges have been left for support.

Another indication of the Conisbrough craftsman's past history is the curious architecture of the niche itself. This would be conventional in a crowded, small-scale wood- or ivory-carving,<sup>54</sup> but in an uncluttered composition and in the context of an actual building, the distorted arch reads oddly. Is it credible that this sculptor had ever been a stonemason? If not, with what other qualification than the carving of important wooden figures could he possibly go on to achieve the status of sculptor in the Minster project?

The suggestion that wood-carving forms were taken into stone sculpture has a wider relevance. Richard Gameson has considered the possibility that illuminators may occasionally have copied stone-carvings, which is the reverse of the process normally observed.<sup>55</sup> Remembering the primacy of wood over stone, it seems even more likely that wooden forms might have influenced drawing styles. The drawn line is infinitely variable — it is characteristically excited, for example, in Anglo-Saxon and Carolingian art — but there is a tendency for figures in Romanesque illuminations to be elongated and sleek. Francis Wormald noticed the appearance of a 'new and solemn style' in England, typified by the St Albans Psalter of c.1120–35.<sup>56</sup> He describes the long thin figures in this manuscript 'as if carved out of wood or stone', and wonders 'where did these English artists obtain their models for these new experiments?'. C. R. Dodwell writes of the same illuminations that the figures are 'compressed into elongated shapes with solid cores'.<sup>57</sup> Similar thoughts might arise in front of the Hunterian gospels and other twelfth-century manuscripts assigned to Northern England.<sup>58</sup> Perhaps in Ottonian times, when this style is first observed, illuminators imagined their narrative pictures populated with the familiar personnel of the Crucifixion scene at the chancel arch. It is therefore suggested that the 'solemn style' of Romanesque figure drawing is traceable to the distinctive constraints and opportunities of wood-working, to the craft's ultimate dependence on a tree trunk.

But to return to Yorkshire. The designer who has been traced from France to Malmesbury and Pontefract was surely only one of a team, and a master-sculptor is likely to have accompanied him, a man trained somewhere in the south of France with Roman originals as his models. Such experience is evident in the seated figures and the Roman-like heads carved on the doorway at Fishlake.<sup>59</sup> Masters were expected to train others and, while pupils would normally come from among the more promising stonemasons, perhaps a proficient carver of wooden statuary came to notice just when large figures were required by the designer. It should not be forgotten how new this concept was.<sup>60</sup> The stone figures discussed in this section, together with the sculpture in the lunettes at

<sup>54</sup>. Legner, pls. 249–51.

<sup>55</sup>. R. Gameson, 'The Romanesque Crypt Capitals of Canterbury Cathedral', *Archeol. Cant.*, 100 (1992), 18–20, 48.

<sup>56</sup>. F. Wormald, 'The development of English Illumination in the Twelfth Century' *J. B. A. A.*, 3rd Series, 8 (1943), pp. 35–37.

<sup>57</sup>. C. R. Dodwell, *The Pictorial Arts of the West 800–1200*, (London 1993), p. 329.

<sup>58</sup>. C. M. Kauffmann, *Romanesque Manuscripts, 1066–1190*, (London, 1975), Cat. nos. 94–97, 101 and 102.

<sup>59</sup>. Wood, *YAJ* 72, figs 7, 14, 16 left.

<sup>60</sup>. F. Saxl, *English Sculptures of the Twelfth Century*, (London 1954) pp. 37–38.

Malmesbury, are some of the earliest full-size or free-standing figures that survive in England.

To conclude this speculative postscript: by the time the Cluniac designer's plans for the postulated west front of the Minster were being made in the 1170s, the English (Yorkshire?) wood-carver retrained by the French master-sculptor would have been ready to work on the necessary series of statues, and he was independent enough by then to return to his wood-carving style. These postulated connections within an established team would tend to confirm that it was indeed the Cluniac monk who designed the late Romanesque west front of York Minster.

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## EXCAVATIONS AT THE WELL HOUSE, LONG MARSTON, NORTH YORKSHIRE, SE 500 514

By Stephen J. Sherlock

*An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at Long Marston between York and Wetherby in December 2002. The work, in advance of a housing development, exposed the foundations of two buildings cutting into the boulder clay. The buildings are of a type of medieval peasant structure that is thought to originate in the thirteenth century. The dwellings excavated at Long Marston are thought to date between the twelfth and fourteenth century based upon the ceramic evidence. A similar parallel to this type of building is suggested from North East England.*

### INTRODUCTION

The village of Long Marston is located 11 km west of York on the A1224, York–Wetherby Road (Fig. 1). The village is mentioned in the Domesday Book twice as *Merstone* and as *Mersetone* (Domesday Book 1992). At the time of the survey Alwine had 23 carucates of land and the village is described as 2 leagues long and 2 leagues broad. The village had ‘land for many ploughs’ with wood pasture 2 leagues long and 1 broad (DB 1992 edition,

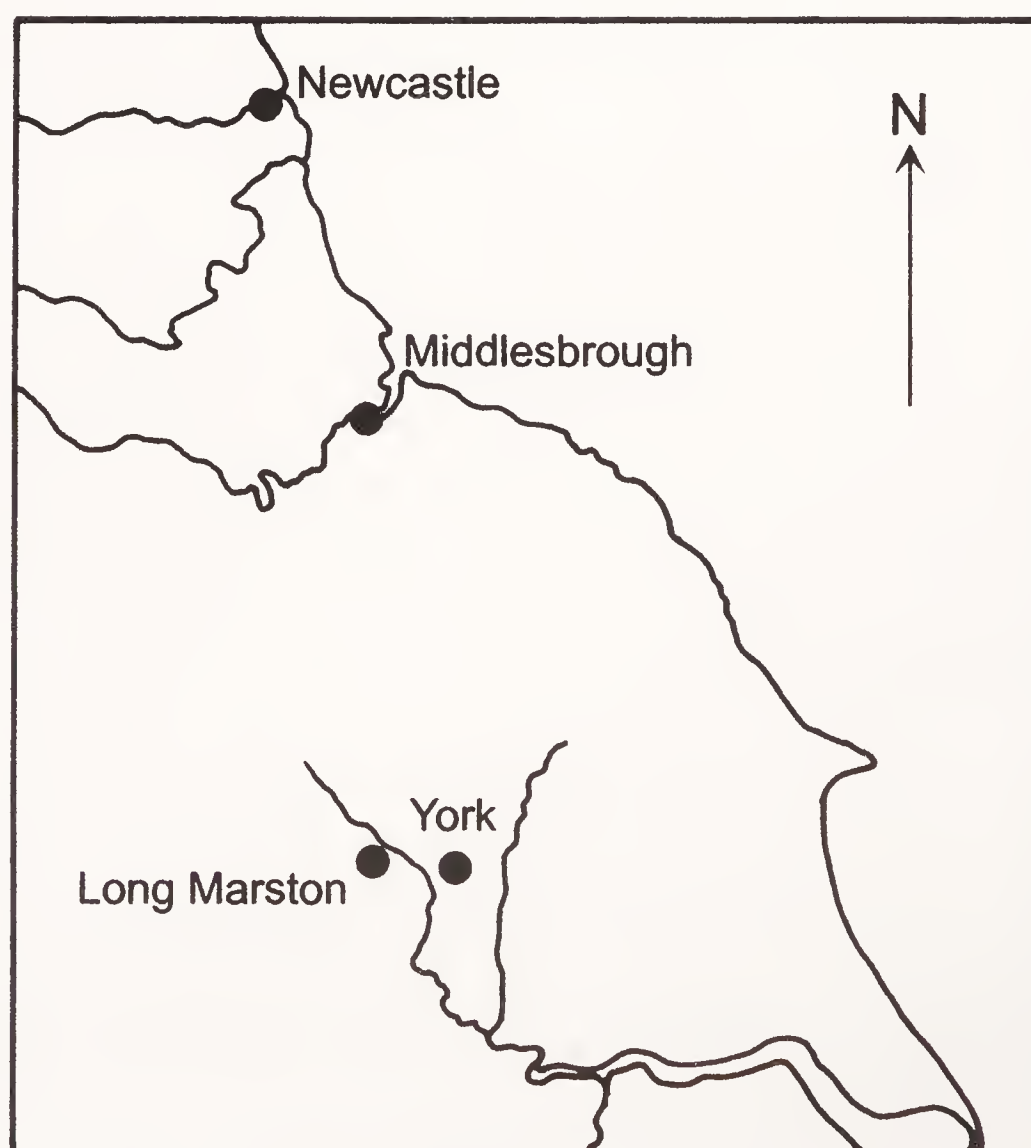


Fig. 1. Plan to show location of Long Marston, west of York.



847). Other documentary references for the village include the grant of pasture in the village for 100 sheep for a period of two years *c.* 1190–1206 at which time it is noted that ‘half of the town held by the local family (de Hooton) and half be a host of freeholders many of whom gave parcels to Fountains’ (Farrer 1914, 435–36). The village is recorded later as Marston between 1250–1281, it is thought that the ‘Long’ element of the place-name is an allusion to the length of the village (Smith 1961, 254). The first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1856 (Fig. 2) shows All Saint’s Church at the southern end of the village. The church was moved to the present site in 1400 following a faculty being granted by Richard le Scrope, Archbishop of York, allowing villagers to demolish the existing church at the smaller village of Angram to the south, and re-erect it on the site of the chapel of ease at Long Marston (Johnson 1974). The village church of All Saints has a late Norman nave and chancel (Pevsner 1979, 355). At the crossroads at the centre of the village a moat is depicted to the south of Long Marston Hall, the site of the excavations is at the crossroads opposite the ‘moat’. It should be noted that the site is listed as a type A1(a), destroyed, in the gazetteer of moated sites of Yorkshire (le Patourel 1973, 125) and as a moated site class F and G2 in the VCH (Page 1912, 52). The village of Long Marston is known nationally as being adjacent to Marston Moor, where on 2 July 1644 Parliamentary forces under Cromwell defeated Prince Rupert.

Where is that banner now? Its pride  
Lies whelm’d in Ouse’s sullen tide;  
Where are those warriors? in their gore  
They cumber Marston’s dismal moor, (anon) (Leadman 1891, 153).

The site of the excavation is at an altitude of 18 m OD, at the cross roads in the village where Angram Road and Tockwith Road cross Wetherby Road (Fig. 2). The Geological Survey of England and Wales records the area around Long Marston as boulder clay over lower red sandstones of the Triassic period (Geological Survey of England and Wales 1970, sheet 70). An archaeological watching brief was requested by North Yorkshire Heritage Unit to supervise the removal of topsoil following the demolition of the property known as the Well House on Tockwith Lane. Following the demolition, the garden soil was stripped across the site to create an access road and to build three detached properties. The removal of the topsoil, that comprised a garden soil 0.30 m deep, revealed a series of features that cut into the boulder clay, recorded as Area A. A similar garden soil was encountered at the west end of the site where features were visible again cutting into the clay. To the east the buildings of the Well House had cut into the boulder clay, but no features of archaeological interest were encountered, in this area recorded as Area B.

## THE WATCHING BRIEF

### AREA A

The removal of 0.30 m of topsoil, from the garden of the Well House Area A exposed a clay surface at the western end of the site into which a series of features were visible (Fig. 3). The features represent two linear ditches, features 23 and 37, aligned E-W and approximately 12 m apart. Between the two ditches there were a series of postholes and several pits. Ditch 23 extended across the site for a distance of 14 m, the feature was 0.73 m wide, but only 0.20 m deep. The ditch had a gentle U-shaped profile with a single fill, context 22, from which sherds of medieval pottery were recovered (Fig. 12.7). The ditch was cut at the eastern end by a modern intrusion, a land drain. Ditch 37 was visible across the site extending W-E. The feature was excavated at one point where it was found to be 1.2 m wide N-S and 0.24 m deep. The feature had a single fill, recoded



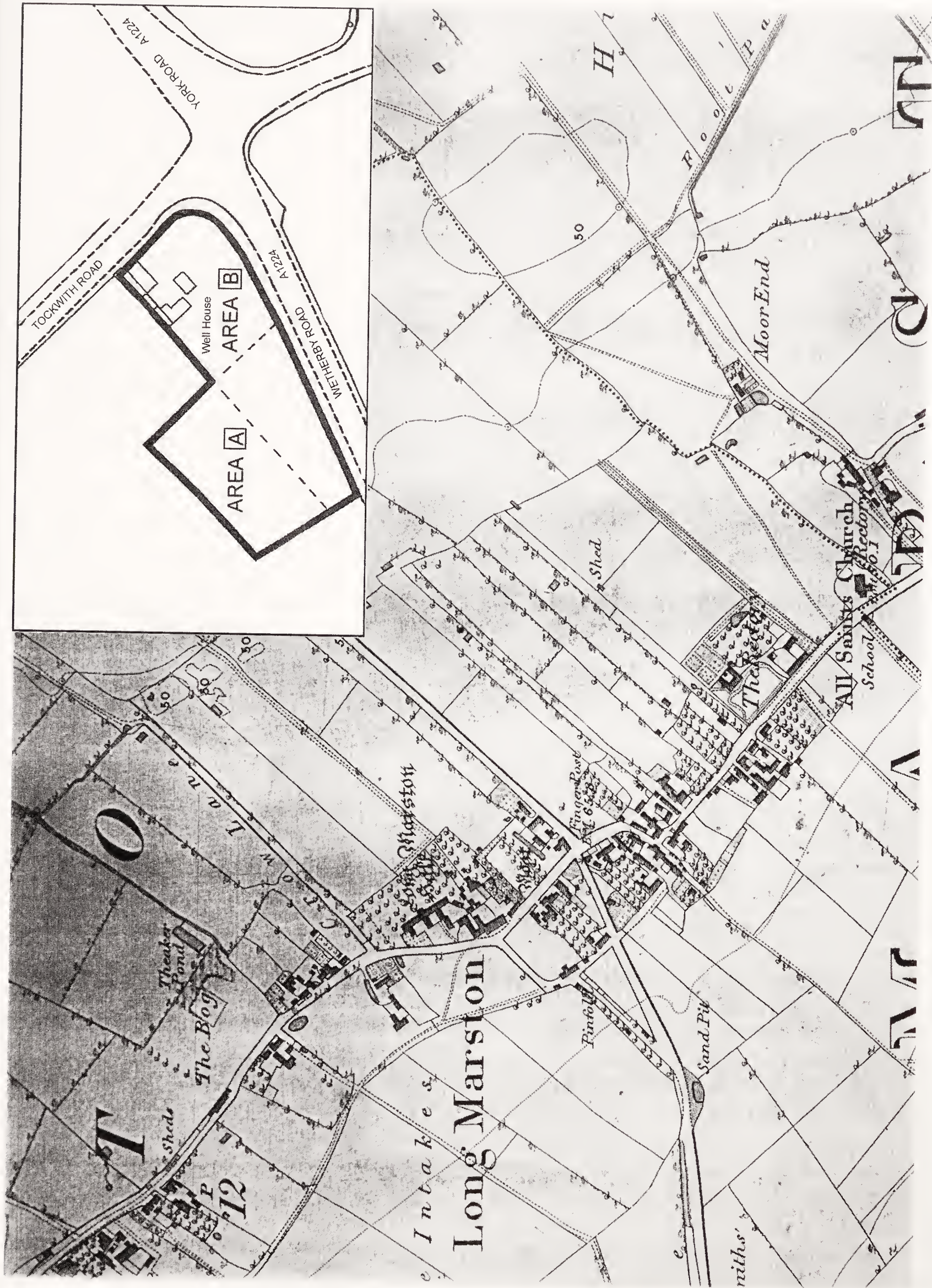


Fig. 2. Ordnance Survey map of Long Marston, published 1856, with an insert to show the location of the areas excavated beside the cross roads in the centre of the village.



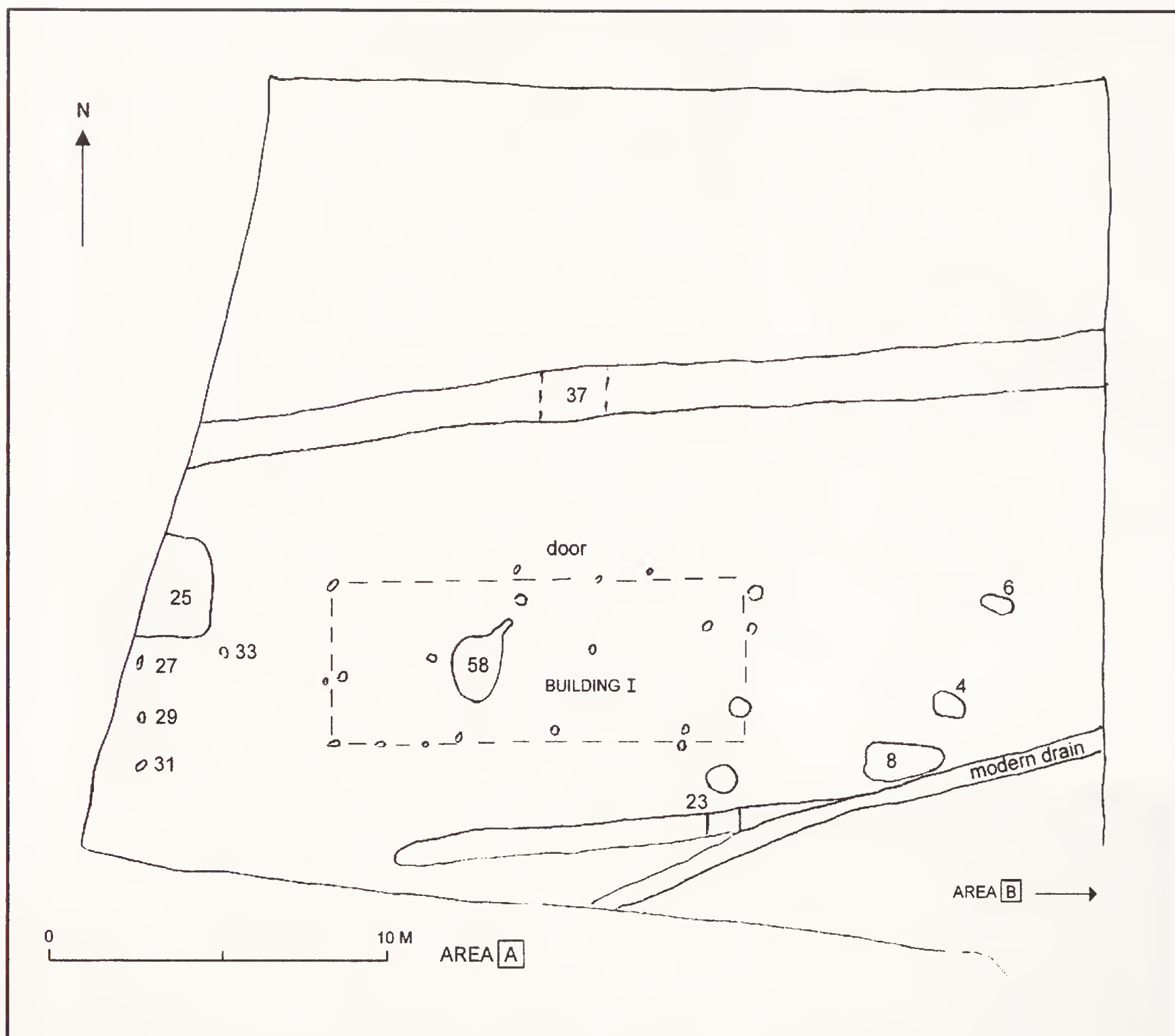


Fig. 3. Plan to show extent of Area A and the location of Building I.

as context 36, which contained medieval pottery. The ditch was shallow, with a flat base and gentle sloping sides (Fig. 12.18). There were no features beyond the ditch to the north in an area of approximately 10 m that had been stripped for the development. The main concentration of features was in the centre of the site where an arrangement of postholes represent the foundations of a medieval building.

This central area has three rows of postholes extending over a distance E-W of 12 m with a N-S width of 5 m; in total there are 18 postholes. There are two possible arrangements for this alignment of posts, either one long building or two much smaller buildings and there are archaeological parallels for both arrangements. The interpretation offered here is for a single building 12 m long and 5 m wide. The arrangement of posts will be discussed from west to east (Figs 4 and 5).

At the western end there were four posts 35, 43, 45 and 54. Posthole 54 was 0.30 m in diameter, with a single fill, context 53, the feature was 0.23 m deep (Fig. 12.23). The two postholes close together, 43 and 45, were different in character with 45 being 0.20 m in diameter and 0.12 m deep (Fig. 12.20), posthole 43 was wider, being 0.42 m wide, and it also had a step or shelf on the inside (Fig. 12.19). Both features had a single fill.

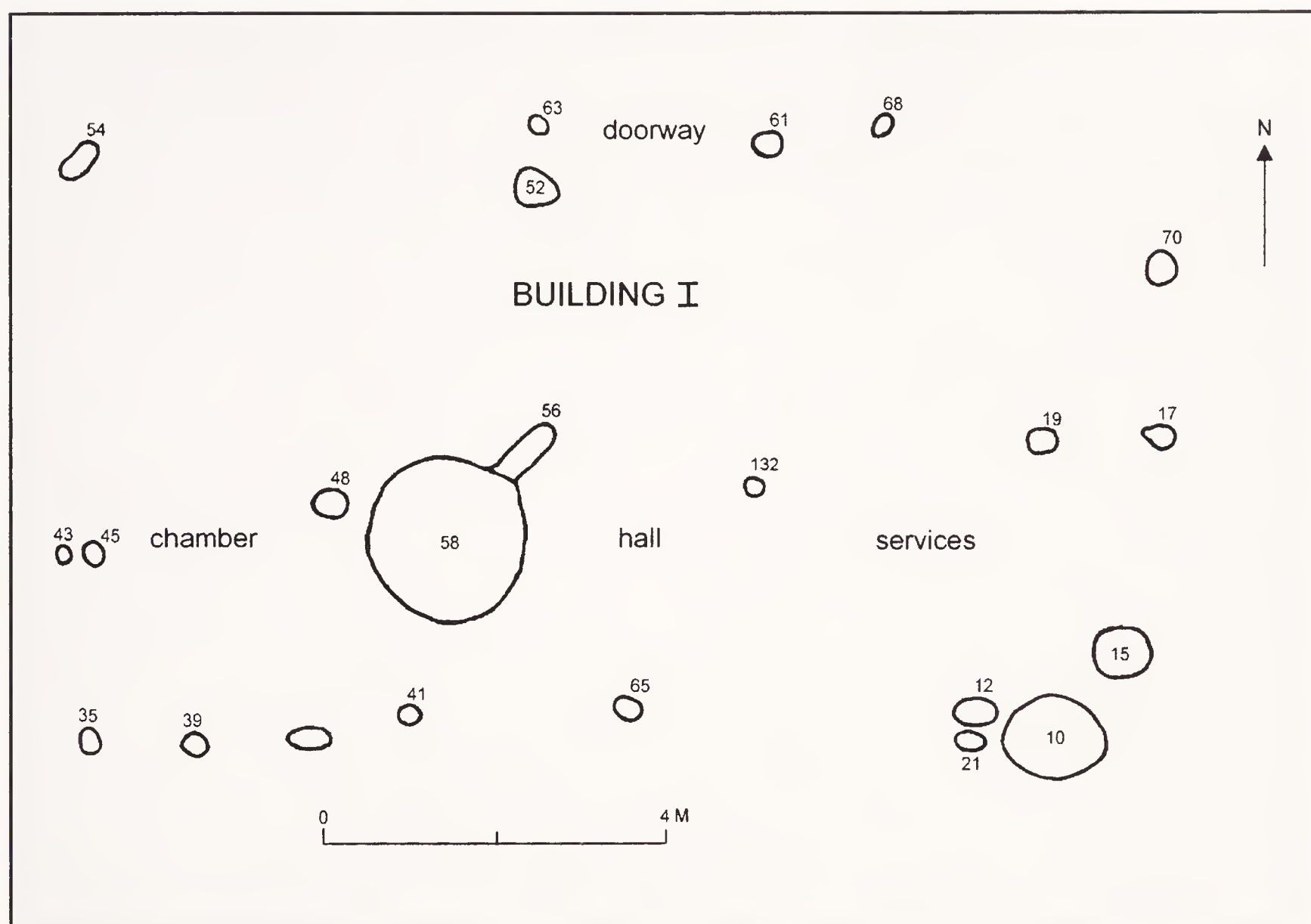


Fig. 4. Plan of Building I.

The post in the SW corner of this alignment was feature 35. It had a diameter of 0.30 m, an uneven base and it was 0.80 m deep (Fig. 12.15). East of this feature there were five other postholes and a pit forming a row (Fig. 4). Feature 39 had a diameter of 0.25 m and a depth of 0.23 m (Fig. 12.16), whilst posthole 41 was an oval-shaped feature being 0.40 m E-W and 0.22 m N-S and 0.10 m deep (Fig. 12.17). Both had single fills and here as elsewhere on the site no postpipes were observed. One metre to the north of posthole 41 was a large circular pit, feature 58, a further posthole, 48, and a linear gully, 56, that had been cut by 58.

Feature 58 was a pit with five fills. It is thought this feature had been a hearth, in the centre of the building. The hearth contained layers 46, 49, 50, 57 and 66, of which layer 50 contained much burnt material forming the reddened base of the hearth. The feature was 1.90 m in diameter and 0.70 m deep, with almost vertical sides and a flat base. Sherds of medieval pottery were found from four of the layers, namely 46, 49, 50 and 57, whilst one large piece of slag was recovered from layer 50. Environmental analysis of layer 50 within the hearth identified one oat grain, fragments of a charred hazelnut and two other unidentified cereal grains, supporting the suggestion of cooking rather than industrial activity (ASUD 2003, 3). The hearth appeared to cut a shallow gully, 56, that ran into the feature. The gully was 0.80 m long, 0.27 m deep, with almost straight sides and a flat base (Fig. 12.24). To the west of feature 58 was another posthole, 48, which was 0.40 m in diameter, 0.18 m deep, with a straight side on the west, but a step on the east (Fig. 12.21).

The southern row of postholes continued east of pit 58. Posthole 65 was a circular feature 0.25 m in diameter and 0.18 m deep (Fig. 13.28), whilst the south-east corner of





Fig. 5. View of the site from the west showing Building I.

the building was represented by posts 21 and 12. Post 21 was a circular feature 0.30 m in diameter and 0.16 m deep with a single fill, layer 20 (Fig. 12.6). Adjacent to 21 was posthole 12, this was 0.56 m N-S x 0.62 m E-W and 0.10 m deep with a single fill, from which medieval pottery was recovered (Fig. 12.5). North of 12 was posthole 19, which was one of five postholes (19, 132, 48, 45, 43) that were aligned through the centre of the building that was thought to have supported the roof. Posthole 19 was 0.30 m in diameter and 0.18 m deep, with a single fill, whilst posthole 54 was circular 0.30 m in diameter and 0.10 m deep. The northern wall was represented by six postholes; a row comprising 54 (discussed above), 52, 63, 61, 68 and 70. Posthole 52 was subcircular, 0.40 m in diameter with a single fill, context 51 (Fig. 12.22). Adjacent to 52 was posthole 63, which was again subcircular, 0.20 m in diameter and 0.12 m deep with a single fill, recorded as 62 (Fig. 13.27). Two metres east of 63 was posthole 61, which was circular, 0.35 m in diameter and 0.14 m deep with two fills, layers 60 and 59 (Fig. 13.26). It is thought that the gap between postholes 63 and 61 may represent a doorway into the building. East of posthole 61 was posthole 68, this was circular, 0.20 m in diameter, but shallow, being only 0.06 m deep (Fig. 13.29). Posthole 70 was a shallow feature, 0.25 m in diameter and only 0.07 m deep, with a single fill, recorded as layer 69 (Fig. 12.30).

Within or just outside of this building there were three features that may be associated with Building I, pits 10 and 15 and posthole 17. Feature 10 was a shallow circular pit 1.14 m in diameter, but only 0.07 m deep. The pit had a single fill, layer 9, that contained medieval pottery (Fig. 12.4). Pit 15 was circular, 0.65 m in diameter, with two fills it was 0.28 m deep. Posthole 17 was 0.30 m N-S and 0.64 m E-W, 0.23 m deep with vertical



sides and a flat base. This posthole is on the alignment of posts through the centre of the building that includes 19, 132, 48, 45 and 43 and may form the eastern side of the building with posthole 70 on an alignment east of pit 10.

To the west of Building I there was a series of postholes and a ditch that may represent a further building and another boundary. Three postholes were recorded in a line on a similar alignment to Building I. The postholes numbered 27, 29 and 31 and had a maximum width of 3.4 m (Fig. 3). Posthole 27 was oval, measured 0.40 E-W, and 0.20 N-S, with a single fill, 26, 0.11 deep (Fig. 12.11). The middle of the three postholes, 29, was also oval, was 0.40 m E-W and only 0.14 m N-S with a single fill, 28, 0.10 m deep (Fig. 12.12). The southern posthole, 31, was circular with a diameter of 0.14 m and a depth of 0.10 m. This feature also had a single fill, 30 (Fig. 12.13). To the north of the postholes was a large ditch, numbered feature 25, 2.8 m wide N-S with a terminal to the ditch that extended inside the excavation for a distance of 2 m. The top fill of the ditch was partially excavated and medieval pottery was recovered, but the proximity of a large spoil heap adjacent to the baulk precluded full excavation. To the SE of ditch 25 was a posthole, feature 33, this feature was 0.20 m in diameter and 0.10 m deep with a stake driven profile (Fig. 12.14).

There were three features east of Building I, on the same alignment as Building I and between ditches 23 and 37. The features comprised pits 4, 6 and 8. Feature 4 was a circular, shallow pit, 1.10 m in diameter and 0.10 m deep, with a single fill, layer 3 (Fig. 12.1). It should be noted that this feature had a similar diameter and depth as pit 10, due west. Feature 6 was an oval pit, 1.36 m E-W and 0.52 m N-S, with a single fill 0.27 m deep (Fig. 12.2). This pit was on the same alignment as posthole 70, at the northern row of postholes for Building I. Feature 8 was a large pit 2 m N-S and 2.7 m E-W, and it was cut at the southern side by a modern drain. The feature had two fills, layers 7 and 71, both of which contained medieval pottery. The feature was 0.20 m deep (Fig. 13.31). These three features are isolated at the eastern end of the site and pits 4 and 6 are on the same alignment, it may be the case that these features form either an extension or annexe to Building I or, perhaps more likely, another building continuing beyond the excavated area into the adjoining modern property.

## AREA B

The eastern part of the site was a maximum of 20 m N-S and 37 m E-W, however, the archaeology within this area was restricted by the recently demolished property the 'Well House'. This property had been demolished prior to the commencement of the archaeological programme of recording. Consequently the north and east side of the site had been disturbed by the construction of this building, but an area at the west end of B and along the route of the access road to the new properties did reveal archaeological features of note (Fig. 6).

The removal of 0.30 m of topsoil from the garden of the Well House exposed a range of features cutting into boulder clay. The features can be defined as ditches crossing the site E-W, pits and a further building thought to be medieval as Building I in Area A.

The southernmost feature was a linear ditch, aligned E-W, recorded for a distance of 12 m along the route of the access road. This ditch was recorded in two places as ditch 107 and as feature 131, located 4 m from the boundary with the Wetherby–York Road. Ditch 107 was 0.60 m wide, with a shallow U shape and a single fill, 106, from which medieval pottery was recovered (Fig. 13.47). A second section was excavated, recorded as feature 131, with a single fill, 130, and was again 0.60 m wide and only 0.10 m deep, containing sherds of medieval pottery (Fig. 13.60). Ditch 87 was located 8.5 m to the north of ditch 107–131. This feature was exposed for 16.5 m, visible from the western



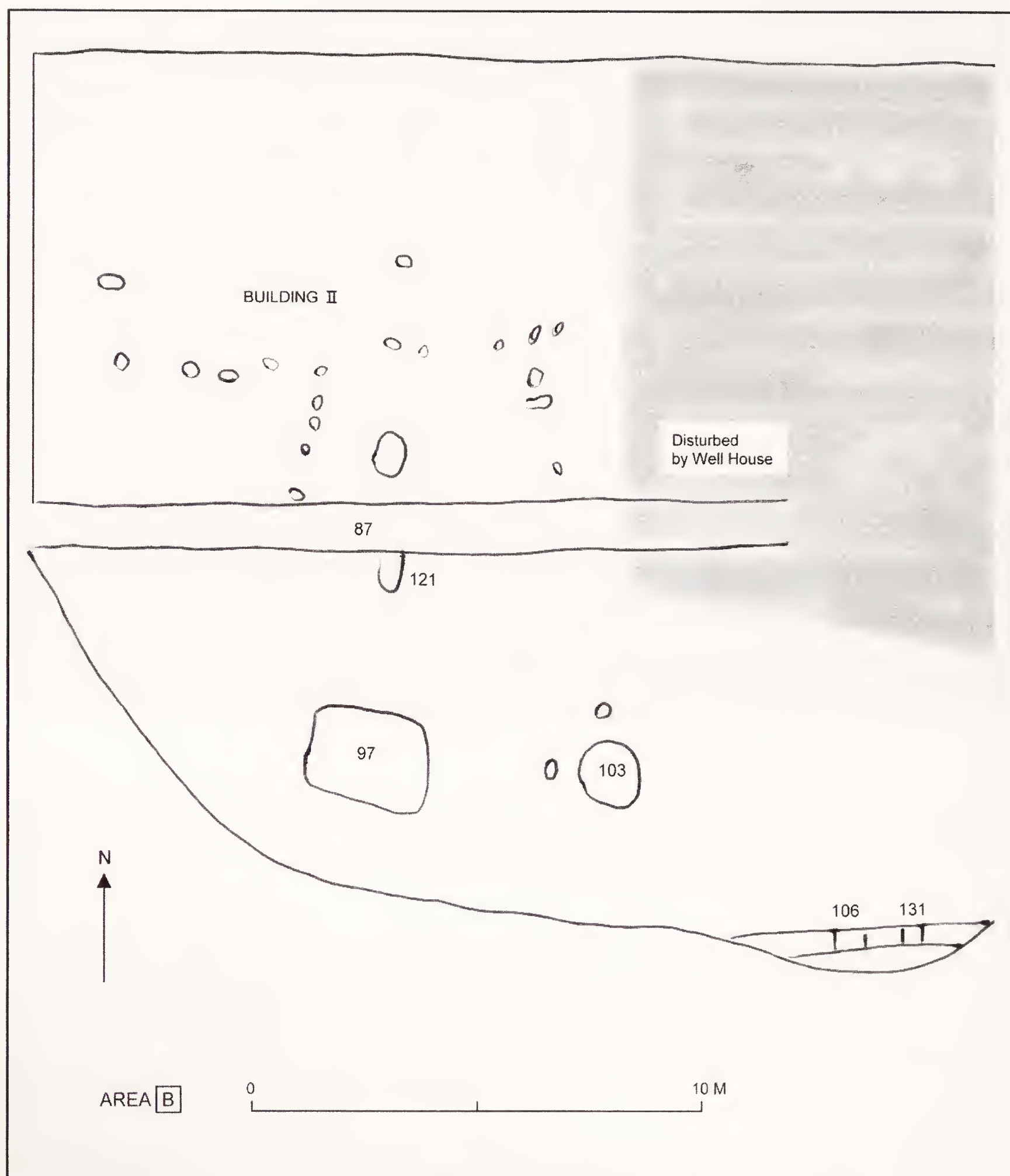


Fig. 6. Plan to show extent of Area B and the location of Building II.

end of Area B, to a point where the ditch had been disturbed by the Well House. Ditch 87 was a U shaped feature, 1.10 m long and 0.44 m deep, with two fills, layers 85 and 86 (Fig. 13.39). The ditch was thought to be a later feature as it cut one linear feature, 121, whilst finds from the ditch also suggested a slightly later, perhaps post-medieval date for this feature. Three charred cereal grains were found in the sample analysed from this feature but were in too poor a state to identify (ASUD 2003, 3).

There were two pits recorded as pits 103 and 97, excavated in the southern part of the site, located between the two ditches, 87 and 131. Pit 103 was circular, being 1.4 m in diameter and 0.40 m deep. The pit had almost vertical east sides and a flat base. It contained three fills, layers 98, 101 and 102 (Fig. 14.45). Two postholes, features 100 and 105, were near to the pit and may have been associated with 103 (Fig. 7a). Posthole 100 was circular, 0.36 m in diameter and 0.12 m deep with a single fill, layer 99, whilst feature 103 to the north was 0.38 m in diameter and 0.10 m deep with a single fill, layer 104 (Fig. 13.46). Pit 97 was initially thought to be a *Grubenhäuser* because of its size and plan (Fig. 7b). The feature was 2.8 m long E-W and 2.02 m wide N-S, with straight sides and a flat base (Fig. 14.43). The feature had three fills, layers 94, 95 and 96. Medieval pottery was found in all three fills and an environmental sample from layer 96 recovered fragments of coal, charcoal and clinker suggesting that an industrial process had been undertaken nearby with the material dumped in this pit (ASUD 2003, 4). The incidence of medieval pottery in all of the fills allied with the lack of any postholes or other structural evidence led to the conclusion that this was not a *Grubenhäuser*.

The main concentration of features on the site comprised an alignment of postholes 10 m long E-W, which in association with other posts is thought to represent a second building. There are in total ten postholes arranged in an alignment from feature 127 in the west to 109 in the east, the postholes are offset from each other suggesting a post and plank construction (Figs 8 and 9). Posthole 127 was circular, being 0.54 m in diameter and 0.14 m deep with a single fill, layer 126 (Fig. 13.58). Posthole 74 was 1.2 m further east, this feature was subsquare, 0.24 m N-S and 0.40 m E-W, and 0.14 m deep with a single fill, layer 73 (Fig. 13.33). Posthole 76, 0.40 m further east was also subsquare. It was 0.40 m N-S and 0.60 m E-W, with a depth of 0.16 m. This feature had a single fill, layer 75 from which several sherds of medieval pottery was found. Posthole 78 was a circular feature, 0.50 m in diameter and 0.16 m deep, again with a single fill, layer 77 (Fig. 13.35). Posthole 80 was 0.80 m further east, subcircular, 0.50 m N-S and 0.36 m E-W, and 0.12 m deep. Posthole 80 had a single fill, layer 79 (Fig. 13.36), and the feature had an alignment of postholes numbered 82, 84 and 91 to the south. There was a gap of 1.2 m between posthole 80 and posthole 93, perhaps representing a door or entrance to the building. Posthole 93 was circular, it was 0.40 m in diameter and 0.10 m deep

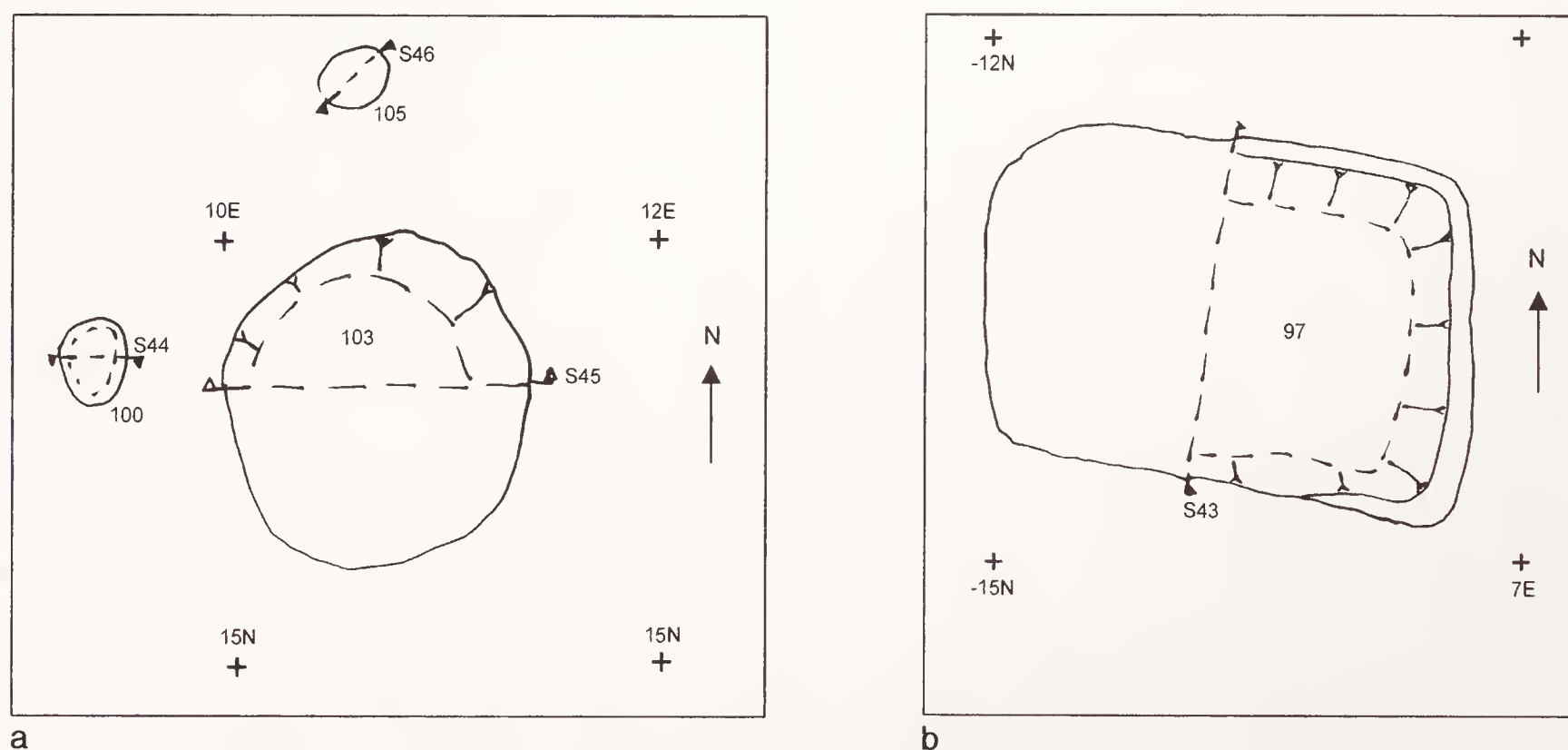


Fig. 7. Plan showing features 103 and 97.



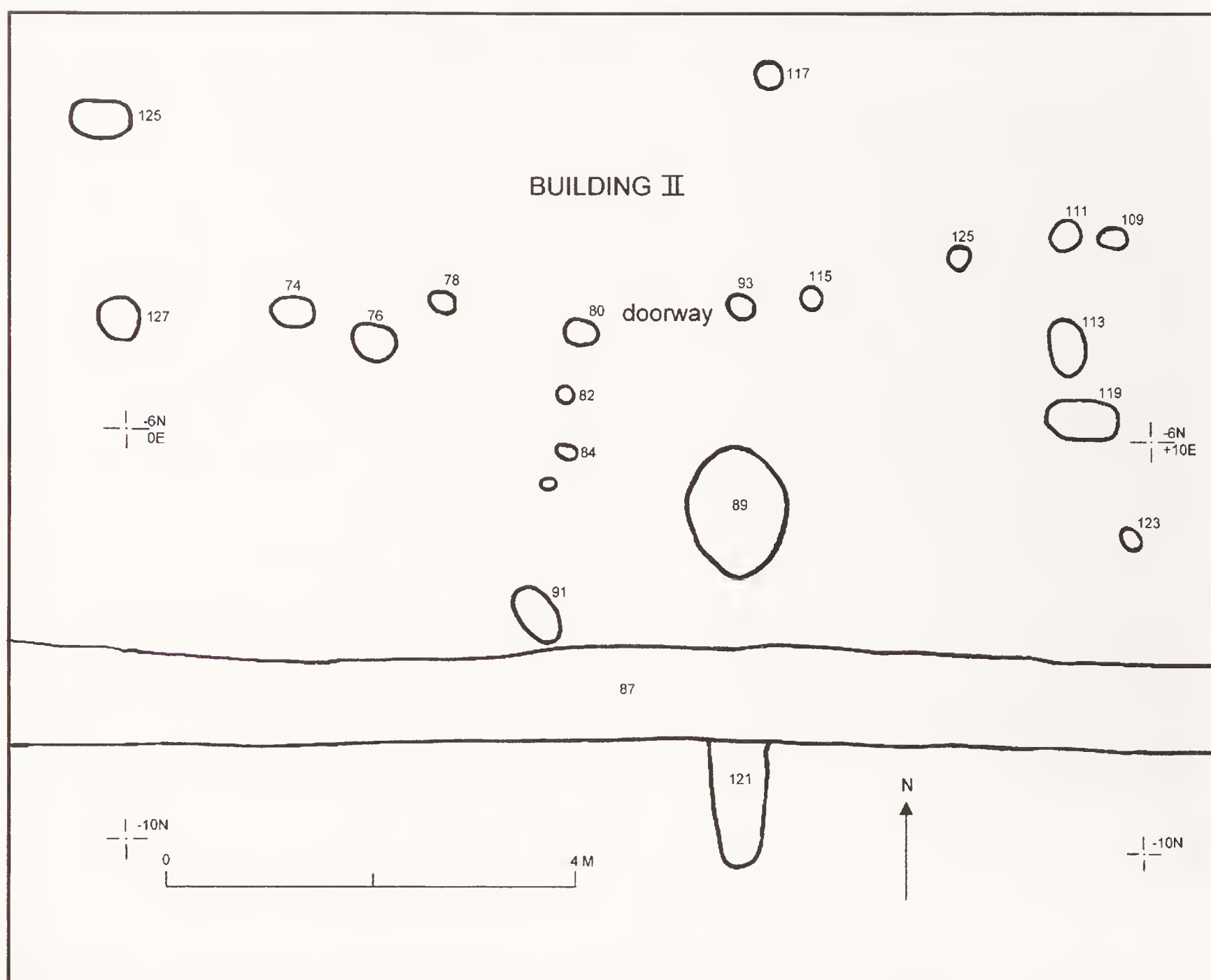


Fig. 8. Plan of Building II.

with a single fill, layer 92 (Fig. 13.42). Posthole 115 was 0.40 m to the east, circular, 0.40 m in diameter and 0.10 m deep, and had a single fill, layer 114, within which fragments of brick were found (Fig. 13.52). Posthole 125 was 1.3 m to the east. The feature was circular, 0.30 m in diameter and 0.10 m deep with a single fill, layer 124. The profile of this feature was different to most postholes as this had a shape reflecting a stake driven post (Fig. 13.57). Posthole 111 was 0.70 m to the east. It had a circular plan, 0.36 m in diameter and 0.12 m deep, the fill of this feature, layer 110 also contained fragments of fired brick (Fig. 13.50). An alignment of posts numbered 113, 119 and 123 could be followed south from posthole 111. The easternmost post in this alignment, feature 109 was 0.10 m east of 111, the post had a circular shape, was 0.30 m in diameter and 0.15 m deep (Fig. 13.45) with a single fill, layer 108.

The row of ten posts are thought to represent a wall of a medieval building, the northern wall either did not survive or this is the northern wall and the southern wall was destroyed by the later feature 87. It should also be stressed here that the postholes from this wall are not very wide or deep, although they are offset from each other reminiscent of a post and plank wall. However, it would be unusual if this did represent this type of construction as post and plank walls are thought to be Saxon in origin and generally have wider and deeper post settings. Postholes 129 and 117 were located 2 m north of the posthole alignment 127–109, Posthole 129 was subsquare, being 0.40 m N-



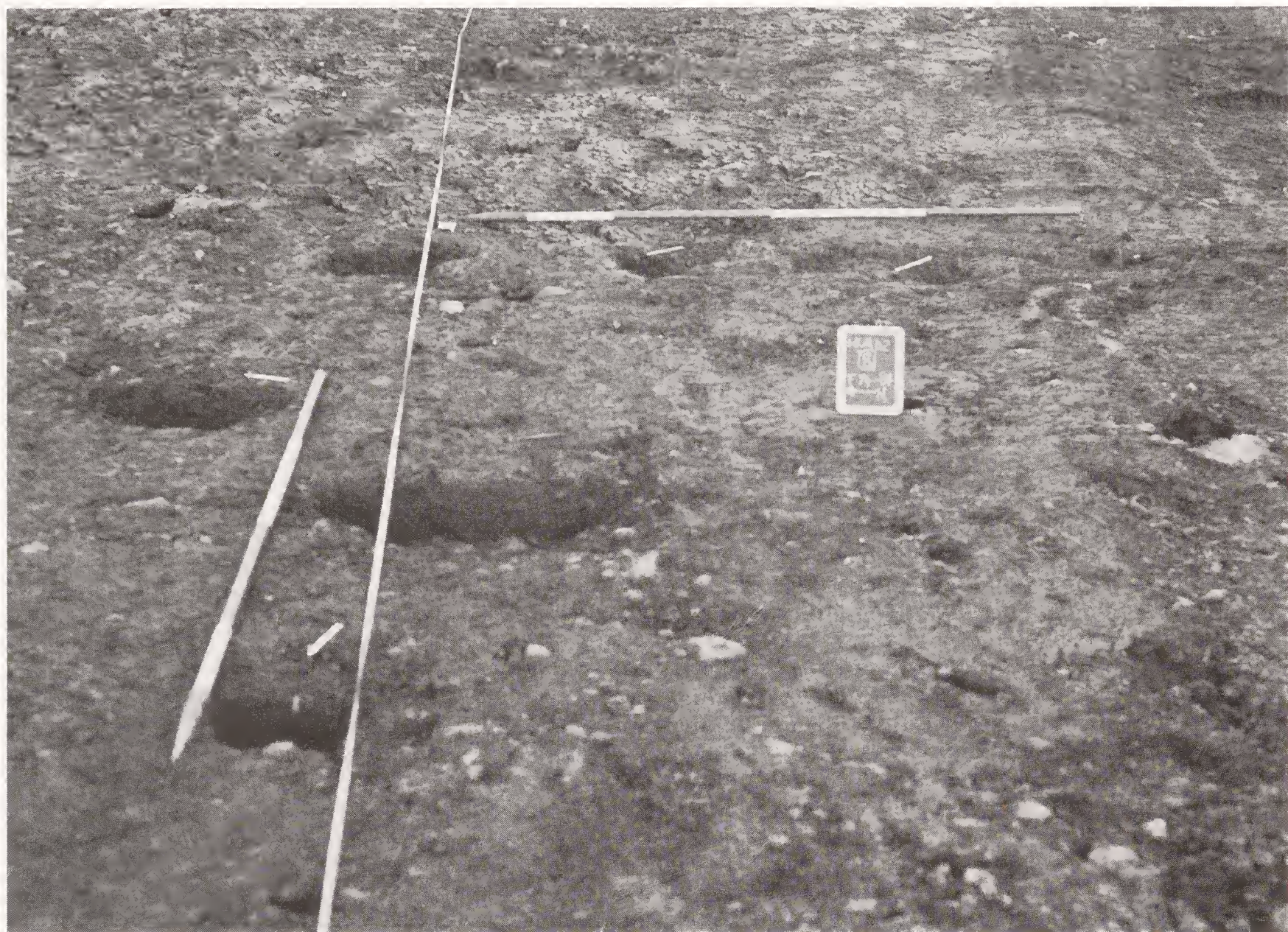


Fig. 9. Alignment of posts 74, 76, 78 and 80.

S and 0.50 m E-W, the feature had a single fill, layer 128 from which medieval pottery was found (Fig. 13.59). Six metres to the east, posthole 117 was circular, 0.40 m in diameter and 0.12 m deep with a single fill, layer 116 (Fig. 13.53). The function of these two posts beyond the row of ten posts is unknown.

An alignment of posts south of the wall suggests the most plausible internal area for Building II. Two alignments of postholes were noted projecting south from this wall of postholes they were recorded as rows 82, 84 and 91, and 113, 119, 123. Posthole 82 was 0.40 m south of feature 80, the posthole was circular 0.30 m in diameter and 0.10 m deep. This posthole had a single fill, layer 81, from which sherds of medieval pottery and three iron nails were recovered (Fig. 13.37). Posthole 84 was 0.30 m to the south, the feature was circular, but smaller than other postholes, being only 0.20 m in diameter and only 0.10 m deep. Posthole 84 had a single fill, recorded as 83 from which a sherd of medieval pottery was recovered. Due south of this feature was a shallow hollow not recorded as a separate feature although it could represent the possible continuation of this line of posts. The southernmost feature in this alignment was feature 91. This shallow pit was oval in shape being 0.55 m E-W and 0.30 m N-S, and was 0.12 m deep and medieval pottery was within the single fill, context 90 (Fig. 13.41). The eastern alignment of posts commenced with feature 113 that was 0.60 m south of 111. Posthole 113 was oval in plan being 0.55 m N-S and 0.40 m E-W. The feature had a single fill, context 112, the posthole was shallow at 0.08 m deep (Fig. 13.51). Feature 119 was 0.20 m south of 113, the feature was a large subsquare posthole, 0.80 m E-W and 0.40 m N-S. Feature 119 had a single fill, context 118 from which a fragment of fired clay was found, the





Fig. 10. Pit 89 under excavation.

feature had straight, nearly vertical sides and a flat base (Fig. 13.54). The southernmost feature on this alignment, 123, was 0.80 m beyond 119. Feature 123 was oval in plan, being 0.34 m N-S and 0.15 m E-W with a single fill, context 122. This feature was only 0.10 m deep. The two rows of postholes are thought to be representing either the line of a timber fence that is adjoining the southern wall of Building II or that posts 113, 119 and 123 represent the eastern side of a building and posts 92, 94 and 91 are a partition or screen adjacent to the door with the western wall beyond the area excavated. With this suggestion the southern wall of the building would have been robbed by linear ditch 87, thus making a building over 10 m long E-W and 4 m wide N-S. A short section of a linear gully, was excavated and recorded as feature 121, this feature was 1.2 m N-S, and 0.60 m E-W, with a single fill, layer 120. Feature 121 had been cut by the linear ditch 87, upon excavation the feature was shallow, being only 0.06 m deep, however, medieval pottery was found from the fill of this ditch. Within the area enclosed by the two rows of posts was a large pit, feature 89. Feature 89 was subcircular being 1.2 m N-S and 0.90 m, E-W (Fig. 10). Pit 89 had a single fill, context 88, that was 0.20 m deep with gentle sloping sides and a flat base (Fig. 13.40). There was no sign of burning around the edges or within this feature refuting any suggestion that this may be a hearth.

## THE FINDS

### METALWORK — IRON

Two iron nails were found in the fill of posthole 82. The nails were associated with a sherd of medieval pottery. Nail 1 was 0.39 mm long with a head 18 mm in



diameter. Nail 2 was 58 mm long with a more corroded head, 15 mm in diameter (not illustrated).

### SLAG

One large piece of slag was found in fill 50 within feature 58, the slag weighed 600 g.

### POTTERY

by Blaise Vyner

The majority of the excavated pottery is of medieval date, and probably of the thirteenth and fourteenth century. However, a broader timespan is represented, with some representation of Gritty Ware, usually viewed as an eleventh or twelfth century product, while at the other end of the chronological spectrum a few sherds from dishes of probable 16th century date are present. There are also sherds of fairly recent earthenware and pieces of brick. On the evidence of the ceramic assemblage it would appear that the site may have been in use between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries, with further episodes of use in the sixteenth century and more recently.

A limited range of vessel forms is present. The assemblage is dominated by plainware jars, although the limited range of forms and fabrics, and the small representation of most vessels, makes it difficult — and probably not sensible — to establish a minimum vessel count. There may be between 25 and 30 vessels represented by the plainware sherds, by contrast no more than 6 glazed jugs are represented in the assemblage. Of particular interest are parts of two vessels which may be associated with industrial or chemical processes (Context B85). These are rarely found on rural sites and are likely to be sixteenth century in date (Moorhouse 1972).

The pottery appears to have been acquired from the local area. In the light of the current poor knowledge of the regional pottery industry the attribution of fabric types has to be regarded as provisional, but in general the pottery in this assemblage appears to originate from the area to the north of York.

#### *Gritty Ware*

Apparently manufactured in a number of locations, in this assemblage Gritty Ware jars may well be a variant of, or a chronological predecessor to, the Tees Valley Ware vessels which also appear here.

#### *Tees Valley Wares (TVW)*

This is a gritty fabric which dominates the Tees Valley area, although the extent of its distribution to the south is unclear. The present assemblage has not been examined in detail and the fabric is only provisionally identified here (Wrathmell 1987, 39).

#### *Red Sandy Ware*

There are a few sherds of pottery in a fine sandy fabric, with colour varying from pink to dark brown, occasionally with a clear glaze producing a brown surface. It is not clear where this material was made and the small quantity present may conflate the products of several potteries.

#### *Hambleton Ware*

Pottery in a lightly sanded fabric fired to grey and orange-grey, frequently green glazed and with combed wavy and straight lines, comprises a significant element of the assemblage. The attribution may not be entirely accurate, since the source is not known



(Jennings 1992, 30–31), and the ware is still poorly defined. Pottery of this kind is here described as Hambleton-style.

### *Thirlby Ware*

A few sherds in a light brown/buff fabric may be products of the Thirlby kilns (McCarthy and Brooks 1988, 230), although the attribution is insecure in the absence of more of the material and more extensive publication. Pottery of this kind is here described as Thirlby-style.

### *Brandsby Ware*

A few sherds of glazed jugs may be from the Brandsby area, whose products are known in the wider area (Jennings 1992, 24–25), although, again, poorly published and defined. Pottery of this kind is here described as Brandsby-style.

### *York Glazed Ware*

A few sherds with white/buff fabric appear to be of this material, of unknown source, but suggested to be the Hambleton area (Jennings 1992, 18).

### *Calcite Gritted Ware*

A small group of sherds from a single jar is in a distinctive fabric which contains numerous calcitic grits, which have leached out leaving irregular cavities and a 'corky' appearance. The grits appear to have been angular and were presumably crushed limestone or chalk. The provenance is not known.

### *Late Medieval Pottery*

A few sherds of pottery of later medieval date are present, comprising dishes in orange and orange-buff fabrics with pale green glazes. The source of the material is unknown: although production is known to have taken place at Osmotherley and in the Hambleton Hills area, other kilns must have existed. Also in a late medieval context, two vessels are present which may have been used in industrial or chemical processes (Context B85).

### *Catalogue*

#### *Topsoil*

Plainware rim sherd, TVW

Plainware sherd, light sandy pink fabric, Brandsby-style

A2

Plainware base sherd, TVW

Dish, orange earthenware fabric with olive green glaze, Osmotherley-type

A7

Jug sherd, green glaze, Hambleton Ware

20 sherds plainware, TVW

2 base sherds, Red Sandy Ware

Plainware base sherd, ?Brandsby

A9

2 sherds jug, green glaze, Hambleton Ware

Sherd plainware, TVW

2 sherds earthenware, nineteenth century

A11

Plainware sherd, TVW

A13

4 sherds plainware, TVW

*A22*

7 sherds plainware, TVW

2 sherds plainware, Thirlby-style

*A36*

Plainware sherd, TVW

2 fragments brick

*A46*

10 plainware sherds, perhaps from the same vessel as in A49, ?Gritty Ware

8 sherds plainware, TVW

*A49*

8 sherds plainware, probably from the same vessel, ?Gritty Ware

*A50*

3 sherds plainware, TVW

3 sherds plainware, Thirlby-style

*A52*

Sherd plainware, burnt white fabric, ?York Glazed Ware

*A57*

2 plainware sherds, TVW

*A71*

8 sherds plainware, TVW

5 sherds plainware, including a rim piece, red-orange fabric with dark grey fabric, numerous cavities from which calcite grits have leached, provenance unknown.

*A72*

4 plainware sherds, including 2 rim pieces, TVW

*B12*

4 plainware sherds, including 1 rim piece, TVW

1 plainware sherd, ?Thirlby

*B75*

Plainware sherd, TVW

Sherd from a jug, thin slip over a red sandy fabric, Red Sandy Ware.

*B81*

Sherd plainware, TVW

*B83*

Plainware base sherd, TVW

*B85*

Sherd from a jar or cistern base, ?Thirlby

4 sherds plainware, varying fabrics but sharing mixed ferruginous grits in a red-buff fabric, probably from the Hambleton area.

Joining sherds in a fine orange earthenware vessel, the form appears to be funnel- or cone-shaped, and may be an alembic.

Joining sherds from a round-based vessel, fine sandy fabric with discoloured buff surfaces and a grey fabric, perhaps a distilling vessel.

*B86*

Plainware sherd, TVW

*B90*

Jug, green glaze over white fabric, York Glazed Ware

*B94*

Plainware sherd, TVW

Plainware sherd, abraded, ?Hambleton

Plainware rim sherd, ?Red Sandy Ware

Fragments fired clay

*B95*

2 plainware rims, TVW

Plainware sherd, heavily fired, ?Humber Ware





Fig. 11. Illustrated potsherds from two examples of an Alembic.  
Scale 1:2.

*B96*

Plainware sherd, TVW

*B106*

Jug, joining sherds, Thirlby-style

*B110*

Fragment brick

*B114*

Fragment brick

*B118*

Sherd earthenware dish, nineteenth century

Fragment brick

*B120*

4 plainware sherds, including a rim piece, TVW

*B128*

Sherd earthenware, nineteenth or twentieth century

Plainware jar base with glaze run over, Thirlby-style

*B130*

Jug, poor green glaze, ?Hambleton Ware

Rim and body sherd, TVW

2 sherds unstratified

Plainware sherd, TVW

## DISCUSSION

The excavation has revealed the ground plan of two medieval buildings. The buildings are of interest because they appear to represent a traditional type of peasant building as recognised by Dyer that is thought to commence in the thirteenth century (Dyer 1986). It is thought that Building I, for which there is a complete plan, may reflect a building divided by partitions to provide different functions under one roof. The usual arrangement for this type of building is to have three or more partitions to include; services, usually separated by a cross passage or corridor, a hall and a chamber (Gardiner 2000, 170). A building of similar size was excavated at Tattenhoe, Buckinghamshire, this is thought to date to the thirteenth century and has an arrangement of services with a hall and chamber beyond (Gardiner 2000, 177). Building I at Long Marston would have a doorway between

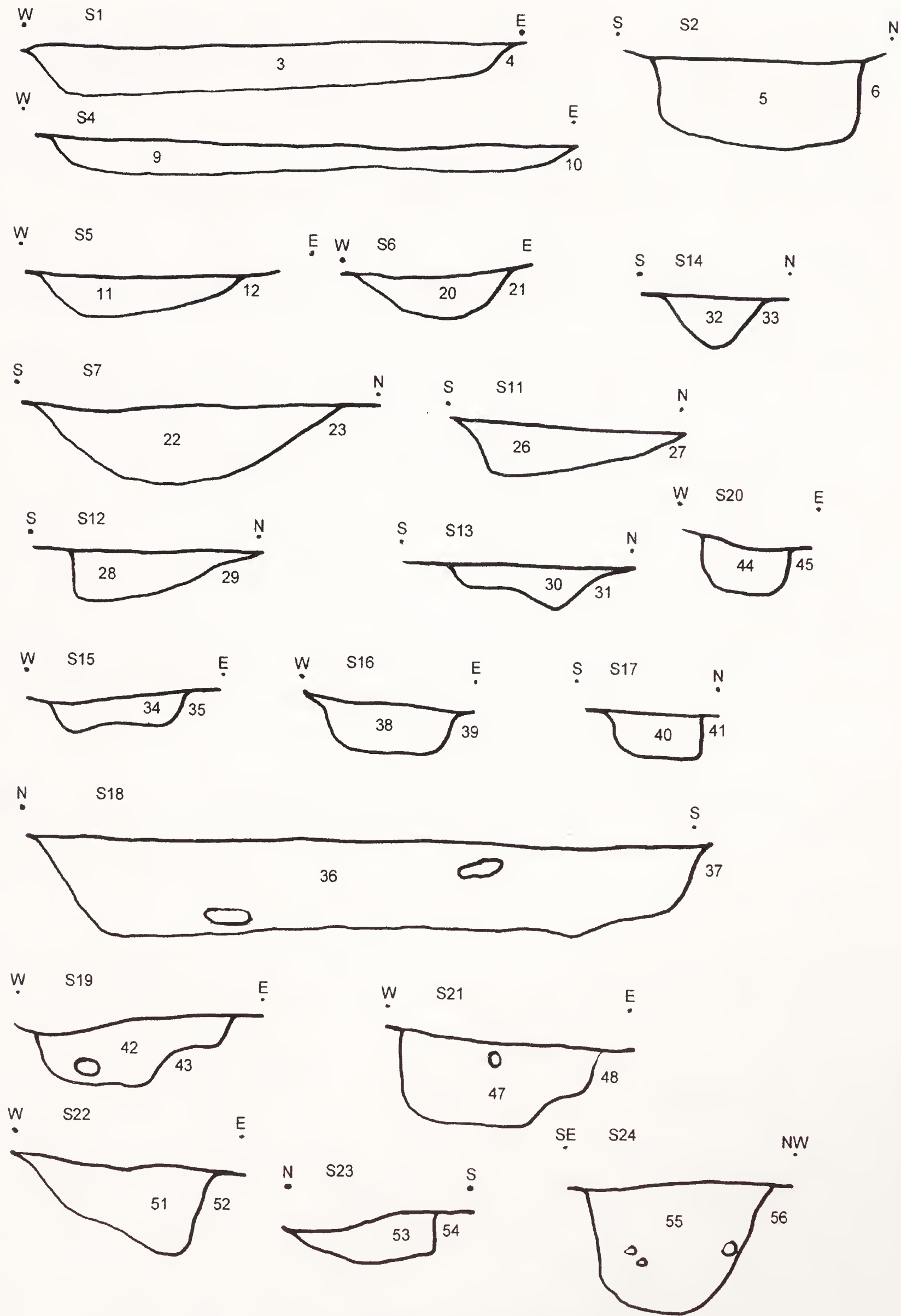


Fig. 12. Sections 1-24. Scale 1:14.



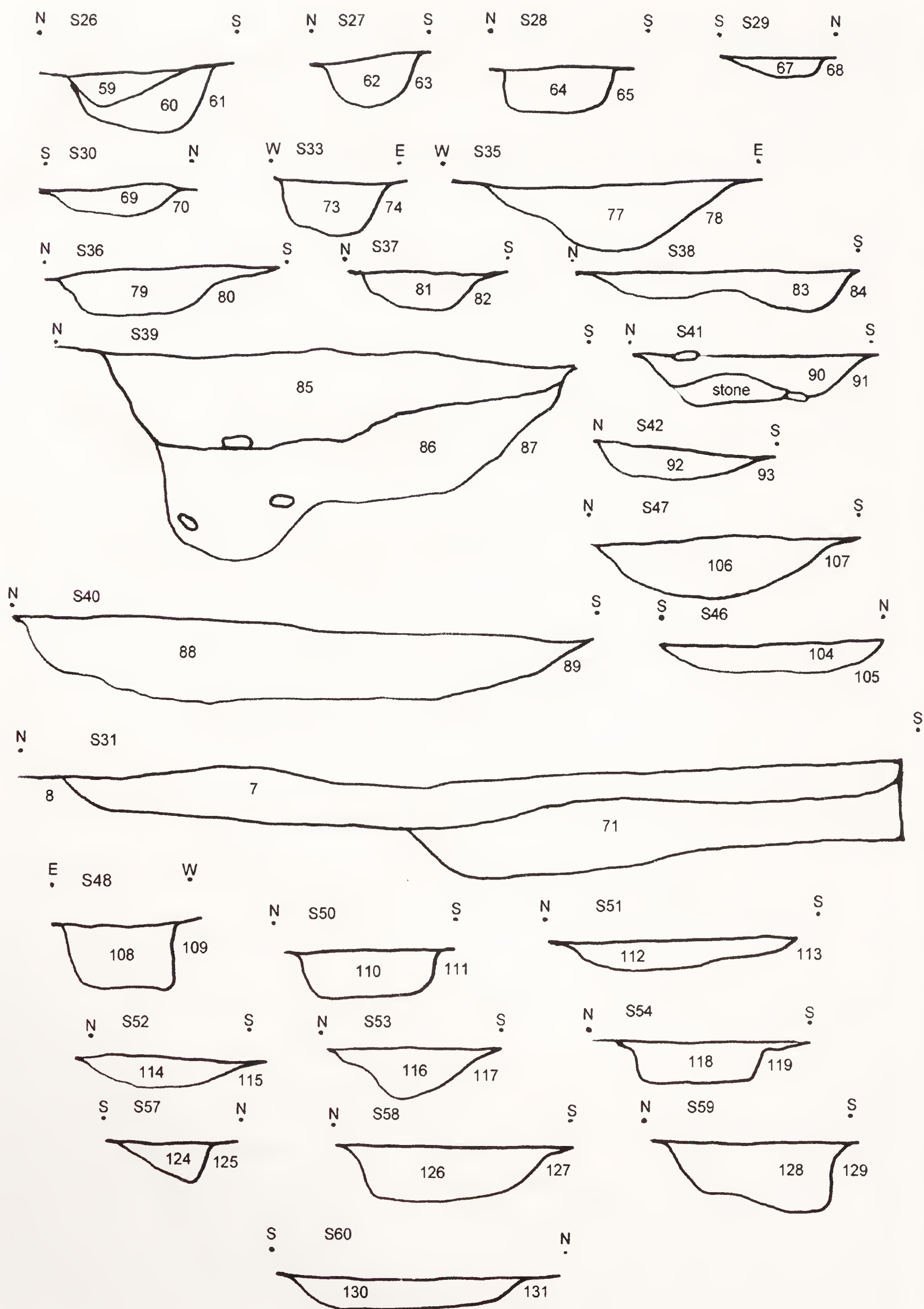


Fig. 13. Sections 26-60. Scale 1:14.

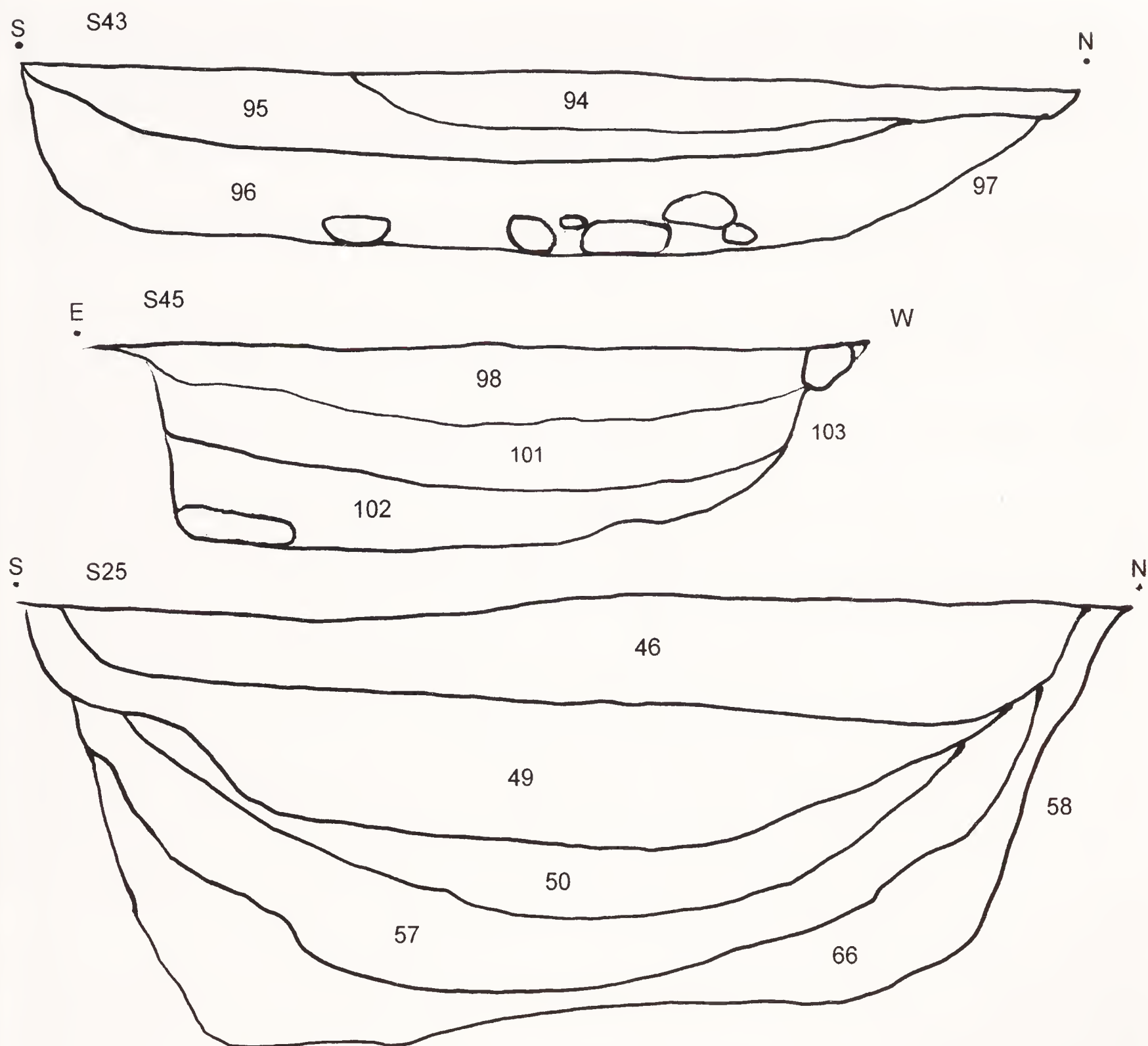


Fig. 14. Sections 43, 45 and 25. Scale 1:14.

posts 61 and 63, with a service area to the east of 61. This would mean that there is no corridor, therefore, the hall is directly through the doorway and the chamber is at the west end being 3 m wide between posts 45 and 48.

The buildings at Long Marston may not have been completely timber, but a post-truss and cruck construction with ground sill walls as recognised by Gardiner (2000, 159). In these structures, the timber trusses divide the bays and stone or wattle fences are used to infill between the posts. It has been argued that the life of the structure can be extended by cutting out rotten timbers that are below ground and underpinning the structure with stone (Wrathmell 1994, 189). In the North East a similar peasant building with three bays was excavated at East Red Hall, house B (Still and Pallister 1978). House B at East Red Hall, near Darlington is thought to date from the thirteenth century, this site had stone footings instead of timber walls and a central hearth (Still and Pallister 1978, 88). Elsewhere a three bay building without corridors was excavated at Brome (Gardiner 2000, 173). Building I at Long Marston could therefore be seen as a second example of this rural tradition of a peasant house in North East England.



Consideration of the parallels for Building II are more problematic, one wall and posts to the west and east were exposed but the possible fourth side was not revealed during the fieldwork. The doorway on the south side is thought to be between posts 80 and 93. The full extent of the building was not exposed during the fieldwork. Building II is 10 m long E-W, whilst Building I is 12 m long, so there is scope for a possible chamber to the west of post 129. One interpretation could be for posts 113, 119 and 123 to define the east wall, 82, 84 and 91 to be a central screen. The southern wall may have been robbed by ditch 87, and the western wall to be beyond the area excavated leaving a possible width for the building at 4 m, comparable to Building I.

Within Yorkshire, the study of the medieval rural settlement at Wharram revealed the plans of medieval long houses. At Wharram Percy, in Area 6, the whole buildings were recognised cutting into chalk rubble, but the plans of the dwellings were hard to identify (Hurst 1979, 46). There are posthole alignments in Area 6 at Wharram that date to the twelfth–thirteenth centuries that are similar in plan to the postholes at Long Marston. Building I is 12 m x 6.46 m, and the possibility that this could form two smaller buildings separated by pit 58 was considered, as there are similar small timber buildings dating to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries from Lot's Hole in Oxfordshire (Foreman *et al.* 2002, 78). However, in light of a review of regional evidence for medieval rural building in the Tees Valley (Daniels 1988) it is felt that it is unlikely that Building I at Long Marston could form two small structures and they must be part of a tradition of longer buildings subdivided by bays. A survey of the rural medieval building tradition in the Tees lowlands found that the structures at Old Boulby represent the only possible earth-fast timber structures whilst urban examples are known from Hartlepool and Yarm (Daniels 1988, 39). The building at Yarm comprised an aisled timber building of three or more bays. The structure, only partially exposed, is thought to date from the first half of the twelfth century (Evans and Heslop 1986, 46). Ceramic evidence has been used to date the buildings at Long Marston to between the twelfth and the fourteenth centuries, and whilst some of the wares are from York and the Hambleton Hills, the incidence of Tees Valley Ware is of note.

The buildings at Long Marston are beside, but set back from, the road between York and Wetherby. Building I was defined by ditches to the north and south. Building II was sited nearer to the road and also closer to the crossroads and it appears that small-scale industrial processes may have taken place at this end of the site. Whilst floor surfaces and hearths did not survive anywhere on site, Building I was relatively undisturbed by later activity. Building II was disturbed by ditch 87, possibly in the post-medieval period when the industrial or chemical activity is suggested by the alembic. Furthermore the area to the east of Building II had been disturbed by the construction of the property known as the Well House. In conclusion, following the use of and dismantling of the medieval buildings some time after the fourteenth century the site may have reverted to a garden whilst small-scale rural industries occurred nearer the crossroads, possibly until the construction of the Well House in more recent times.

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plans, although it must be stressed the final interpretation is the author's. The finds and excavation archive have been deposited with Harrogate Museum Service with the agreement of the developers.

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## THE SAINT OF MIDDLEHAM AND GIGGLESWICK

By Heather Edwards

*The churches of Middleham and Giggleswick in Yorkshire are dedicated to an otherwise unknown saint, Alkelda. It was suggested in the YAJ of 1893 that the name derives from the phrase halig keld, holy spring, and that the saint had never existed. This article argues that Alkelda probably did exist, that the modern form of the name is based on a genuine Anglo-Saxon personal name, Alchhild, and that she may have lived some form of the religious life in seventh- or eighth-century Northumbria.*

The Yorkshire parish churches of Middleham and Giggleswick are dedicated to an obscure saint whose name generally appears in modern documents as Alkelda.<sup>1</sup> In the case of Middleham this is a joint dedication with St Mary. The tradition at these churches is that Alkelda was a Saxon princess, strangled for her faith by two Danish women at the time of the Viking invasions. Her reputed tomb was still in Middleham church in 1553,<sup>2</sup> and a piece of her head was among the bequests of the Dean of Middleham in 1559.<sup>3</sup> Medieval stained glass depicting her martyrdom survives in the church.

The earliest extant document referring to the saint is a charter dated 16 February 1389 in which Richard II grants to Ralph Neville, *inter alia*, the right to hold a fair at Middleham every year on the feast of St Alkelda.<sup>4</sup> When Richard, Duke of Gloucester, founded the Collegiate Church at Middleham, his grants to the Dean and Chapter in 1480 included a buck on the feast of the Assumption of St Mary and a doe on the feast of St Alkelda.<sup>5</sup> Her feast day is 5 November, and the fair developed into Middleham Moor Fair, one of the largest livestock fairs in the north of England, which, in the nineteenth century, was held over three days, and declined in the twentieth only because of competition from auction marts, finally ending in 1926.

In the *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* of 1893 Mr T. Carter Mitchell argued that Alkelda had never actually existed, but that her name was derived from a phrase meaning 'holy spring' which survives in the Yorkshire wapentake name Hallikeld (Old English *halig*, Old Norse *kelda*).<sup>6</sup> This theory has been frequently repeated and widely accepted. However, a great deal of work has been done on names since Mr Mitchell wrote, and his theory cannot now be defended.

Old English *halig* would not give rise to medieval and modern Al-, as a glance at place-name evidence confirms. Of modern English place-names beginning Al-, a very large proportion derive from Anglo-Saxon personal names with the initial letter A-, E-

<sup>1</sup> I should like to thank Professor Nicholas Brooks and Dr Carole Hough for reading earlier drafts of this paper and offering valuable advice, and Mrs Jenny Cooksey at the Brotherton Library, University of Leeds, for a great deal of generous help.

<sup>2</sup> William Atthill, *Documents Relating to the Foundation and Antiquities of the Collegiate Church of Middleham* (London, 1847), Appendix N, p. 98.

<sup>3</sup> *Wills and Inventories of the Archdeaconry of Richmond*, ed. J. Raine, Surtees Society, 26 (1853), p. 129.

<sup>4</sup> Public Record Office, Charter Rolls, 12 Richard II, m. 21.

<sup>5</sup> Atthill, *Documents*, App. G, p. 86.

<sup>6</sup> T. Carter Mitchell, 'S. Alkelda of Middleham', *YAJ*, 12 (1893), pp. 83–86. On Hallikeld see Eilert Ekwall, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names*, 4th ed. (Oxford, 1960), p. 212.



or *Æ-*. None derives from *halig*. Modern place-names which do derive from *halig*, such as Hallatrow, Somerset, and Halliford, Middlesex, retain the initial *H-*.<sup>7</sup>

The second element of the saint's name is spelt with an *-e-* in only two of the twelve manuscripts dated between 1389 and 1559, in which she is mentioned: '*in festo sancte Alkelde virginis*';<sup>8</sup> 'the feast of seint Alkeld'.<sup>9</sup> The other ten all have an *-i-* or *-y-* spelling: '*sancte Alkilde*';<sup>10</sup> '*sancte Alkild*';<sup>11</sup> '*Seynte Alkylde*';<sup>12</sup> '*Saynte Alkyld*'.<sup>13</sup> The weight of evidence suggests that the latter versions, representing the pronunciation *-ild*, are to be preferred, and this does not support a derivation from Old Norse *kelda*.

The final *-a* of Alkelda is merely a modern addition. Female Anglo-Saxon names did not end in *-a* because this is not a feminine ending in Old English, although the practice of making female names into first declension nouns in Latin texts did lead to the development of such forms, especially from the twelfth century. It has given rise to many other inaccurate modern forms, such as Hilda, for the saint of Whitby, instead of Hild.<sup>14</sup>

The modern form of the saint's name, Alkelda, is therefore a debased and inaccurate version, and the arguments T. Carter Mitchell based on it do not stand up. It is, in fact, fully plausible that the name is a perfectly genuine Anglo-Saxon name.

It is probable that the medieval version, Alkild or Alkyld, reflects alterations in the received forms of names after the Norman Conquest, and that *Alk-* represents the Old English name element which was spelt *Ealh-* in Wessex, *Alh-* in Mercia and *Alch-* in Northumbria. The development of the fricative *-h-* to the plosive *-k-* offers no phonological difficulties as it is paralleled in other names, both in Yorkshire and elsewhere.<sup>15</sup> Another example is the Northumbrian prince, Alchmund, now known as St Alkmund of Derby.<sup>16</sup> The first element of Alkelda's name is the same, and on this basis it should have the Northumbrian spelling *Alch-*.

The extant spellings in *-ild* and *-yld* of the second element of the name are fully consistent with a derivation from *-hild*, which was used with several different first elements

<sup>7</sup> Ekwall, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names*, pp. 4–9 and 212.

<sup>8</sup> TNA:PRO, Charter Rolls, 12 Richard II, m. 21, Charter of Richard II, 16 Feb. 1389.

<sup>9</sup> North Yorkshire County Record Office, Ecclesiastical Commissioners, Middleham Papers, ref. ZRC, Indenture of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, 1 Oct. 1480 (Atthill, *Documents*, App. G, p. 86.)

<sup>10</sup> a) Middleham Papers, Letter of John Sherwood, Archdeacon of Richmond, 20 Jan. 1478; b) Middleham Papers, Letters patent of Edward IV, 21 Feb. 1478, (Atthill, *Documents*, App. A, p. 61); c) Middleham Papers, Charter of Edward IV, 24 Mar. 1481, (Atthill, *Documents*, App. E, p. 82); d) Vatican Register, Vol. 611, 10 Sixtus IV, f. 26v, Papal confirmation of the creation of the Collegiate Church, 26 Jun. 1481; e) Middleham Papers, Charter of Edward IV, 10 Apr. 1482, (Atthill, *Documents*, App. H, p. 87). f) Middleham Papers, two letters from the Dean and Chapter of York, 1482.

<sup>11</sup> University of York, Borthwick Institute, V9, f.404, Will of James Carr, 26 Mar. 1528, (*Testamenta Eboracensis*, ed. J. Raine, Surtees Society, 79 (1884), p. 219n.)

<sup>12</sup> Middleham Papers, Lease of Middleham Rectory, 18 Jan. 1553, (Atthill, *Documents*, App. N, p. 98.)

<sup>13</sup> Will of William Willys, 4 April 1559: Raine, *Wills and Inventories*, p. 129.

<sup>14</sup> W. W. Skeat, 'The corrupt spelling of Old English names,' *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society*, 13 (1908), pp. 15–29 at p. 16. It should be mentioned that traditional views on the influence of Norman scribes were strongly challenged by Cecily Clark, 'Towards a reassessment of "Anglo-Norman influence on English place-names"', and 'The myth of "The Anglo-Norman scribe"', *Words, Names and History: Selected Writings of Cecily Clark*, ed. P. Jackson (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 144–55 and 168–76. It has been suggested that Hild is a short form of a dithematic name, possibly one of three recorded in the *Liber Vitae Dunelmensis*: Hildigyð, Hildiðryð or Hildeburh: Christine E. Fell, 'Hild, abbess of Streonæshalch', *Hagiography and Medieval Literature: A Symposium*, ed. H. Bekker-Nielson (Odense, 1981), pp. 76–99, at pp. 76–78.

<sup>15</sup> A. H. Smith, *The Place-Names of the West Riding of Yorkshire*, Part One, English Place-Name Society, Vol. 30 (Cambridge, 1961), p. 44; and Part Seven, Vol. 36 (Cambridge, 1962), p. 90. On personal names in England after the Conquest, see Cecily Clark, 'Onomastics' in *The Cambridge History of the English Language*, Vol. 2, 1066–1476, ed. N. Blake (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 542–606, at pp. 551–87, 'Anthroponymy'.

<sup>16</sup> For an early spelling see D. W. Rollason, 'Lists of saints' resting-places in Anglo-Saxon England', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 7 (1978), pp. 61–93, at p. 89. Skeat, *Proc. Camb. Antiquarian Soc.*, 13, p. 23. Several churches in the Midlands are dedicated to this saint. All spell his name Alkmund.



to form female Anglo-Saxon names such as Æthelhild, Eormenhild, Wulfhild and Aestorhild.<sup>17</sup>

The name of the saint of Middleham and Giggleswick was therefore probably Alchhild. The two elements, separately well attested, do not otherwise occur together, so the name is unique. Its invention is unlikely, and it may be reasonably concluded that a genuine, historic woman is commemorated by the surviving dedications.

Our knowledge of Alchhild's life is very limited. Her name, feast day and church dedications establish that she was an Anglo-Saxon woman, that she died on 5 November and that she came to be regarded as a saint. This does not, of course, imply a formal declaration of sainthood by the papacy: that method of canonisation dates from the papacy of Innocent III (1199–1216). In Anglo-Saxon England a monastic community, or indeed any other group of people, provided that they had some clerical support, could, and not infrequently did, declare that an individual was a saint.<sup>18</sup> Alchhild was presumably considered a potential saint. Her body would therefore be disinterred, declared incorrupt (which was considered proof of sanctity) and re-buried in a raised tomb in the church. Thereafter this tomb would become her shrine, she would be venerated as a saint and the date of her death celebrated as her feast.

In some cases, such as that of St Cuthberht, a local cult created in this way was publicised by the writing of a life of the saint, and became widely known.<sup>19</sup> In others, for example St Frithuswith of Oxford, memories of the individual faded away until only a name, and perhaps a feast day, remained, all knowledge of the person's life being lost.<sup>20</sup> Sometimes this gap in knowledge was filled at a later date by a story of martyrdom, which might include bizarre and miraculous events.<sup>21</sup> In fact, very few Anglo-Saxon saints were martyrs, and only one female Anglo-Saxon saint was definitely murdered.<sup>22</sup> It would therefore be unwise to interpret the story of Alchhild's martyrdom literally.

It is more helpful to consider the evidence for other saints. A list of women who were of Anglo-Saxon race and living before 1066, and who have been regarded at some time as saints, contains sixty-four names (see Appendix A). Most of these are well-attested, and in every case there is at least a reasonable probability that the individual did exist.<sup>23</sup> (Reputed Anglo-Saxon female saints who probably never existed are listed separately: see Appendix B.)

In seven cases we have no knowledge of the individuals' lives. Of the remaining fifty-six, about forty were abbesses, seventeen of these being founders, while seven more were nuns living in monasteries and a few others followed some form of the religious life, in some cases possibly as solitaries.<sup>24</sup> Clearly the main route to sainthood for Anglo-Saxon women was the monastic life. Thirty-three of the saints are known to have been closely

<sup>17</sup> W. G. Searle, *Onomasticon Anglo-Saxonicum* (Cambridge, 1897), pp. 41, 215, 232, 511. On the formation of Anglo-Saxon names, see Ceeily Clark, 'Onomastics', in *The Cambridge History of the English Language*, Vol. 1, *The Beginnings to 1066*, ed. R. M. Hogg (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 452–89, at pp. 456–71, 'Anthroponymy'.

<sup>18</sup> On Anglo-Saxon saints and saint-making generally see *Local Saints and Local Churches in the Early Medieval West*, ed. Alan Thacker and Richard Sharpe (Oxford, 2002).

<sup>19</sup> James Campbell, Eric John and Patrick Wormald, *The Anglo-Saxons* (London, 1982), pp. 79–81.

<sup>20</sup> F. M. Stenton, 'St Frideswide and her times', *Preparatory to Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. D. M. Stenton (Oxford, 1970), pp. 224–33.

<sup>21</sup> See, for example, Stenton, 'St Frideswide', pp. 225–26; Denis Bethell, 'The lives of St Osyth of Essex and St Osyth of Aylesbury', *Analecta Bollandiana*, 88 (1970), pp. 75–127.

<sup>22</sup> Osthryth, daughter of Oswiu, King of the Northumbrians and wife of Æthelred, king of Mercia: *Bede's Ecclesiastical History*, v 24.

<sup>23</sup> For a more comprehensive list, see John Blair, 'Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Saints', in *Local Saints and Local Churches in the Early Medieval West*, ed. Alan Thacker and Richard Sharpe (Oxford, 2002), pp. 495–565.

<sup>24</sup> These figures are only approximations in view of the uncertainty about the identities and careers of many saints.



related to kings. If it is assumed that every abbess in the list was an aristocrat, which would almost certainly be the case, then about fifty of the saints can be shown to have been upper-class women.

It seems likely that the Middleham legend is correct in describing Alchhild as a Saxon princess. It is also quite possible that she was the abbess of a monastery at Middleham where her reputed tomb was, perhaps established in the mid to late seventh or early eighth century, the period when a great many monasteries were created in Northumbria, and when many persons later recorded as saints had lived.<sup>25</sup> She may well have been the founder of such a community. The fact that the church at Giggleswick is also dedicated to Alchhild suggests the possibility that there was a daughter-house there, possibly established at some time after the takeover of the Craven area by the Northumbrian kings c. 670.<sup>26</sup> The absence of Alchhild from the *Liber Vitae Dunelmensis* may indicate that these monasteries did not have close links with Lindisfarne.

The story of Alchhild's murder by the Danes has parallels in other saints' legends. St Osgyth of Essex is said to have been killed by pagan Vikings; in fact there is little doubt that she was the seventh-century founding abbess of a monastery.<sup>27</sup> Matthew Paris, writing in the thirteenth century, recounts a story that St Æbbe of Coldingham was killed by Danes; but Æbbe was a seventh-century abbess mentioned by Bede, as Paris knew, so he assumed that there was another, later abbess called Æbbe.<sup>28</sup> There is no other evidence for her, and it is unlikely that she ever existed. The legend, as in the case of Osgyth, is confused and inaccurate. But it may be that genuine Viking attacks on St Osgyth's and St Æbbe's (*i.e.* on their communities) gave rise to stories of attacks on the saints personally. Similarly, it could well be that the Middleham legend has its origins in a Danish attack on a monastery known as St Alchhild's, after its earlier sainted abbess.

The prospects in secular life for a high-born lady in early Anglo-Saxon England, as for centuries after, were an arranged marriage to a stranger, followed by the perils of childbirth and the risk of early widowhood. Female saints' legends sometimes describe their fleeing from marriage to the monastic life, and there may well be an element of truth in this. As well as a life of prayer for the devout, monasteries offered peace and security, educational opportunities, a refuge for widows and the divorced, and, for abbesses, the possibility of considerable power and status. Family life was not necessarily left behind, as close relatives followed one another into monasteries; nor was the life always one of deprivation and asceticism: Bede's account of Coldingham and the archaeological finds at Whitby both suggest a comfortable lifestyle.<sup>29</sup>

If Alchhild lived in one of these communities, she may well have had a happy life and a peaceful death.

#### APPENDIX A FEMALE ANGLO-SAXON SAINTS

The women listed here were of Anglo-Saxon race, living before 1066 and regarded at some time as saints. The brief account which follows each name is intended only to indicate the woman's identity. A note of the chief primary evidence for her life follows

<sup>25</sup> *Bede's Ecclesiastical History; Venerabilis Baedae Opera Historica*, ed. C. Plummer (1896), *Epistula ad Ecgbertum*, pp. 405–23. John Blair, 'A saint for every minster?', in Thacker and Sharpe, *Local Saints*, p. 456.

<sup>26</sup> *The Life of Bishop Wilfrid by Eddius Stephanus*, ed. B. Colgrave (Cambridge, 1927), p. 37. P. N. Wood, 'On the little British kingdom of Craven', *Northern History*, 32 (1996), pp. 1–20.

<sup>27</sup> Bethell, *Analecta Bollandiana*, 88, pp. 75–127.

<sup>28</sup> Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora*, 1, ed. Henry Richards Luard, Rolls Series 57 (1872), pp. 391–92.

<sup>29</sup> *Bede's Ecclesiastical History*, iv 25; Campbell *et al.*, *The Anglo-Saxons*, p. 79.

in cases where this is straight forward. Otherwise a reference is given to a modern discussion of the evidence.

For fuller details of most of these women, especially of their cults and shrines, the reader is referred to John Blair's 'Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Saints', in *Local Saints and Local Churches in the Early Medieval West*, ed. Alan Thacker and Richard Sharpe (Oxford, 2002), pp. 495–565.

#### ABBREVIATIONS

ASC	Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, trans. D. Whitelock, in <i>English Historical Documents 1 c. 500–1042</i> , 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1979), pp. 145–261.
<i>Catalogus Sanctorum</i>	' <i>Catalogus Sanctorum in Anglia Pasantium</i> ', British Library, MS Harley 3776, fos. 118–27 and Lambeth Palace Library, MS 99, fos 187–94.
HE	<i>Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People</i> , ed. B. Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford, 1969).
<i>Hugh Candidus</i>	<i>Chronicle of Hugh Candidus</i> , ed. W. T. Mellows (1949), resting-place list, pp. 59–64.
Knowles <i>et al.</i>	David Knowles, C. N. L. Brooke and Vera London, <i>The Heads of Religious Houses. England and Wales 940–1216</i> (Cambridge, 1972).
<i>Letters of Boniface</i>	<i>Die Briefe des Heiligen Bonifatius und Lullus</i> , ed. Michael Tangl, <i>MGH, Epistolae Selectae</i> 1 (Berlin, 1916).
<i>Life of Leofgyth</i>	<i>Vita Leobae</i> , ed. G. Waitz, <i>MGH, Scriptores</i> 15, part 1 (Hannover 1887), pp. 118–31.
<i>Life of Osgyth</i>	Denis Bethell, 'The lives of St Osyth of Essex and St Osyth of Aylesbury', <i>Analecta Bollandiana</i> , 88 (1970), pp. 75–127.
<i>Life of Wilfrid</i>	<i>The Life of Bishop Wilfrid by Eddius Stephanus</i> , ed. B. Colgrave (Cambridge, 1927).
LVH	<i>Liber Vitae: Register and Martyrology of New Minster and Hyde Abbey, Winchester</i> , ed. W. de Grey Birch, <i>Hampshire Record Society</i> (1892).
MGH	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica</i>
<i>Mildthryth</i>	D. W. Rollason, <i>The Mildrith Legend</i> (Leicester, 1982).
S	P. H. Sawyer, <i>Anglo-Saxon Charters: An Annotated List and Bibliography</i> (1968).
SRP	D. W. Rollason, 'Lists of saints' resting-places in Anglo-Saxon England', <i>Anglo-Saxon England</i> , 7 (1978), pp. 61–93.
<i>Veiled Women</i>	Sarah Foot, <i>Veiled Women</i> , 2 vols (2000).

Æbbe (i): founding abbess of Coldingham, Berwickshire, and half-sister to Oswiu, king of the Northumbrians 643–670.

HE iv 19, 25; *Two Lives of St Cuthbert*, ed. B. Colgrave (Cambridge, 1940), ch. 3, pp. 80–81, ch 10, pp. 188–89; *Life of Wilfrid*, ch. 39, pp. 78–79.

Æbbe (ii): possibly founding abbess of Abingdon, Berkshire.

S. E. Kelly, *Anglo-Saxon Charters VII: Charters of Abingdon Abbey, Part I* (Oxford, 2000), p. cxcviii; J. Blair, *Anglo-Saxon Oxfordshire* (Stroud, 1994), p. 64.

Æbbe (iii) or Eormenburh: founding abbess of Minster-in-Thamet, Kent; daughter of Eormenred, brother to Eorcenberht, king of Kent 640–664; wife of Merewalh, king of the Magonsæte.

*Mildthryth*.

Ælfflæd: abbess of Streonæshalch (now Whitby, Yorkshire), in succession to Hild; daughter of Oswiu, king of the Northumbrians 643–670.

HE iii 24; iv 26; *Life of Wilfrid*, ch. 60, pp. 128–33.

Ælfgifu: possibly abbess of Shaftesbury, Dorset, and usually identified with the wife of King Eadmund (921–946).

SRP, no. 36.



Ælfhild(?): local saint of Poppleton, Yorkshire.

In 1066 church land at Nether Poppleton '*fuit terra S. Eluride*', *Domesday Book Yorkshire, Part Two*, ed. Margaret L. Faull and Marie Stinson (Chichester, 1986), 25W14.

Ælfthryth: abbess of Repton, Derbyshire, when Guthlac entered the religious life there c.700.

*Felix's Life of St Guthlac*, ed. B. Colgrave (Cambridge, 1956), ch. 20, pp. 84–85.

Æthelburh (i): founding abbess of Lyminge, Kent; daughter of Æthelberht, king of Kent d. 616; wife of Edwin, king of the Northumbrians 617–633.

*HE* ii 9, 14, 20; *Mildthryth*.

Æthelburh (ii): founding abbess of Barking, Essex; sister to Eorcenwald, bishop of London. It is probable that these two were members of the Kentish royal family.

*HE* iv 6.

Æthelburh (iii): abbess of Hackness, Yorkshire.

*Life of Wilfrid*, ch. 59, pp. 128–29; inscription on a cross at Hackness, James Lang, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculptures III, York and Eastern Yorkshire* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 135–41; *Hugh Candidus*.

Æthelburh (iv): abbess of Faremoutier-en-Brie; daughter of Anna, king of the East Angles. *HE* iii 8.

Æthelflæd: abbess of Romsey, Hampshire.

SRP, no. 34; *LVH*, p. 58; Knowles *et al.*, p. 218; *Veiled Women*, 2, pp. 149–55.

Æthelgyth: abbess of a Northumbrian monastery, possibly Coldingham.

Symeon of Durham, *Libellus de Exordio et Pro cursu istius hoc est Dunhelmensis Ecclesie*, ed. D. W. Rollason (Oxford, 2000), p. 164.

Æthelthryth: founding abbess of Ely, Cambridgeshire; daughter of Anna, king of the East Angles; wife of Ecgrith, king of the Northumbrians 670–685.

*HE* iv 19; ASC s.a. 673, 679.

Alchhild: possibly abbess of Middleham, Yorkshire.

Church dedications at Middleham and Giggleswick, Yorkshire.

Arild: no details of her life survive.

Church dedications at Oldbury-on-Severn and Oldbury-on-the-Hill, Gloucestershire; inscription at Gloucester Abbey; E. S. Lindley, 'St Arild of Thornbury', *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*, 70 (1951), pp. 152–53.

Balthild: reputedly an Anglo-Saxon slave; wife of Clovis II, king of Neustria 638–656, and later regent for their son, Clothar III; a monastic founder and patron, she ultimately retired to the monastery at Chelles.

*Vita Sanctae Balthildis Reginae*, ed. Bruno Krusch, *MGH, Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum* 2 (Hannover, 1888), pp. 475–508; translated with commentary in Paul Fouracre and Richard A. Gerberding, *Late Merovingian France, History and Hagiography 640–720* (Manchester, 1996), pp. 97–132.

Begu: nun at Hackness, Yorkshire, a daughter-house of Whitby.

*HE* iv 23.

Cuthburh: founding abbess of Wimborne, Dorset; sister to Ine, king of the West Saxons 688–726; wife of Aldfrith, king of the Northumbrians 685–704.

ASC s.a. 718; SRP no. 45.

Cuthflæd: relics at *Liemenstrie*; interpretation of this place-name is a matter of dispute.

*Catalogus Sanctorum*; *Veiled Women*, 2, pp. 106–17.

Cwenburh: possibly abbess of Wimborne; sister to Ine, king of the West Saxons 688–726.

ASC s.a. 718; SRP, no. 45.

Cyneburh (i): founding abbess of Castor, Northamptonshire; daughter of Penda, king of the Mercians d. 655; wife of Alchfrith of Northumbria, son of king Oswiu.

*HE* iii 21; SRP, no. 26; *Mildthryth*.

Cyneburh (ii): possibly founding abbess of Gloucester.

William Henry Hart, ed., *Historia et Cartularium Monasterii Sancti Petri Gloucestriae*, Rolls Series 33a (1863), pp. lxiv–lxviii.

Cyneswith: daughter of Penda, king of the Mercians d. 655.

ASC (E), s.a. 656, 675, 963; SRP, no. 26; *Mildthryth*.

Eadburh (i): aunt of St Osgyth of Aylesbury and possibly nun or abbess of Adderbury, Oxfordshire.

*Life of Osgyth*.

Eadburh (ii): resting-place at Southwell-on-Trent, Nottinghamshire.

SRP, no. 9.

Eadburh (iii): abbess of Minster-in-Thamet, Kent.

*Mildthryth*; S91.

Eadburh (iv): nun at Winchester; daughter of Edward the Elder.

SRP, no. 33; Osbert of Clare, *Vita beatae virginis Edburge* in Susan J. Ridyard, *The Royal Saints of Anglo-Saxon England* (1988), pp. 259–308.

Eadgyth (i): aunt of St Osgyth of Aylesbury, and possibly abbess of Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire.

*Life of Osgyth*.

Eadgyth (ii): possibly founding abbess of Polesworth, Warwickshire; possibly sister to King Æthelstan.

SRP, no. 18; Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora*, 1, ed. Henry Richards Luard, Rolls Series 57a (1872), pp. 446–47; *Veiled Women*, 2, pp. 140–41.

Eadgyth (iii): nun at Wilton; daughter of King Eadgar.

SRP, no. 35; Vita S. Editha, *Analecta Bollandiana*, 56 (1938), pp. 5–101.

Ealdgyth: resting-place at Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire.

*Hugh Candidus*.

Eanflæd: abbess of Streonæshalch (now Whitby, Yorkshire); daughter of Edwin, king of the Northumbrians 617–633; wife of Oswiu, king of the Northumbrians 643–670.

*HE* ii 9, 20; iii 15; iv 26.

Eanswith: founding abbess of Folkestone, Kent; daughter of Eadbald, king of Kent 616–640.

*Catalogus Sanctorum*; *Mildthryth*.

Eorcengote: nun of Faremoutier-en-Brie; daughter of Eorcenberht, king of Kent 640–664.

*HE* iii 8.

Eormengyth: nun at Minster-in-Thamet, Kent; daughter of Eormenred, son of Eadbald, king of Kent 616–640.

*Mildthryth*; *Hugh Candidus*.

Eormenhild: abbess of Ely, Cambridgeshire; daughter of Eorcenberht, king of Kent 640–664; wife of Wulfhere, king of the Mercians 657–675.

*Mildthryth*.

Frithuswith: founding abbess of Oxford.

S 909; SRP, no. 46; F. M. Stenton, 'St Frideswide and her times', *Preparatory to Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. D. M. Stenton (Oxford, 1970), pp. 224–33.

Hild: founding abbess of Streonæshalch (now Whitby, Yorkshire), d. 680; daughter of Hereric, nephew to Edwin, king of the Northumbrians 617–633.

*HE* iv 23.



Hildelith: abbess of Barking, Essex, in succession to Æthelburh; correspondent of Aldhelm.

*HE* iv 10; *Aldhelm The Prose Works*, trans. Michael Lapidge and Michael Herren (1979), p. 59; *Letters of Boniface*, no. 10, pp. 7–15.

Leofgyth: founding abbess of Tauberbischofsheim and chief female helper of Boniface.

*Life of Leofgyth; Letters of Boniface*, nos 29, 67, 96 and 100, pp. 52–53, 139–40, 216–17, 223.

Leofwyn: local saint of Bishopstone, Sussex.

G. R. Stephens, 'The burial place of St. Lewinna', *Mediaeval Studies*, 21 (1959), pp. 303–12.

Maerwyn: abbess of Romsey, Hampshire.

SRP, no. 34; *LVH*, p. 58; Knowles *et al.*, p. 218; *Veiled Women*, 2, pp. 149–55.

Margaret: sister of Eadgar the Ætheling and wife of Malcolm III, king of Scotland 1058–1093.

Life by Turgot, *Symeonis Dunelmensis Opera et Collectanea*, ed. Hodgson Hinde, *Publications of the Surtees Society*, 51 (1867), pp. 234–54.

Mildburh: founding abbess of Much Wenlock, Shropshire; daughter of Merewalh, king of the Magonsæte.

St Mildburg's Testament, H. P. R. Finberg, *The Early Charters of the West Midlands*, 2nd ed. (Leicester, 1972), pp. 197–216; SRP, no. 15.

Mildgyth: nun of Eastry, Kent; daughter of Merewalh, king of the Magonsæte.

*Mildthryth*.

Mildthryth: abbess of Minster-in-Thamet, Kent; daughter of Merewalh, king of the Magonsæte.

*Mildthryth*; S17, 26, 86, 87, 1180.

Modwyn: subject of different traditions, possibly a hermit or nun at Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire.

C. Hohler, 'St Osyth and Aylesbury', *Records of Buckinghamshire*, 18 (1966–1970), pp. 61–72.

Osburh: abbess, possibly founder, of Coventry, Warwickshire.

*Hugh Candidus*; John Rous, *Historia Regum Anglie*, ed. T. Hearne (Oxford 1716), p. 104.

Osgyth (i): daughter of Frithuwald, sub-king of Surrey, probably the donor of S1165; local saint of Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire.

*Life of Osgyth*.

Osgyth (ii): founding abbess of Chich, Essex (now St. Osyth); wife of Sighere, king of the East Saxons.

SRP, no. 22; *Life of Osgyth*.

Osthryth: daughter of Oswiu, king of the Northumbrians 643–670; wife of Æthelred, king of the Mercians 675–704; murdered by Mercian noblemen 697.

*HE* iii 11, v 24; ASC s.a. 697; SRP, no. 8.

Pega: sister of St. Guthlac; probably a nun.

*Felix's Life of Saint Guthlac*, ed. Colgrave, chs. 50–51, pp. 154–63; ch. 53, pp. 168–69.

Sæthryth: abbess of Faremoutier-en-Brie; stepdaughter of Anna, king of the East Angles.

*HE* iii 8.

Seaxburh: founding abbess of Minster-in-Sheppey, Kent; abbess of Ely; daughter of Anna, king of the East Angles; wife of Eorcenberht, king of Kent 640–664.

*HE* iv 19; *Mildthryth*.

Sigeburh; possibly abbess of Minster-in-Thamet, Kent.

S29, 143.

Thecla: nun at Wimborne, Dorset, and Tauberbischofsheim; abbess of Ochsenfurt and Kitzingen.

*Letters of Boniface*, no. 67, pp. 139–40; ‘De S. Thecla Virgine et Abbatisae Kitzingae ad moenum in Franconia’, *Acta Sanctorum Octobris* 7 (Paris and Rome, 1869), pp. 59–64.

Tibba: possibly a nun or hermit at Ryhall, Leicestershire.

ASC (E) s.a. 963.

Wærburh: probably abbess of Hanbury, Staffordshire; daughter of Wulfhere, king of the Mercians.

S667; *Mildthryth*.

Wealdburh: abbess of Heidenheim, helper of Boniface.

*Ex Wolfhardi Haserensis Miraculis S. Waldburgis Monheimensibus*, ed. O. Holder-Egger, *MGH, Scriptores* 15 (Hannover 1887), pp. 535–55.

Wihtburh: daughter of Anna, king of the East Angles, d. 743; probably a hermit at Holkham, Norfolk and later founding abbess of a community at East Dereham, Norfolk.

ASC (F) s.a. 798; *Mildthryth*; church dedication at Holkham.

Wulfhild: abbess of Barking, Essex, and Horton, Dorset.

*Hugh Candidus*; Life by Goscelin, *Analecta Bollandiana* 32 (1913), pp. 10–26; Knowles *et al.*, p. 213.

Wulfthryth: abbess of Wilton, Wiltshire; mistress of King Eadgar and mother of St Eadgyth (ii).

*LVH*, p. 57; Knowles *et al.*, p. 222.

Wynthryth: possibly abbess at March, Cambridgeshire.

*Liber Eliensis*, ed. E. O. Blake, Camden Society, 3rd ser., 92 (1962), pp. 145–48; *Hugh Candidus*; church dedication at March.

## APPENDIX B

### REPUTED FEMALE ANGLO-SAXON SAINTS WHO PROBABLY NEVER EXISTED

Æbbe: ninth-century abbess of Coldingham, probably an attempt by Matthew Paris to explain the story that St Æbbe was killed by Vikings.

Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora*, 1, ed. Henry Richards Luard, Rolls Series 57 (1872), pp. 391–92

Æthelthryth: hermit of Crowland, Lincolnshire, according to Crowland tradition, unsupported by evidence from elsewhere.

S189; *Veiled Women*, 1, p. 55.

Bega: nun of St Bees, Cumberland. A famous relic at her shrine was a bracelet, OE *beag*: her name and legend probably derive from this.

J. M. Todd, ‘St. Bega: cult, fact and legend’, *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society*, 80 (1980), pp. 23–35.

Blida: mother of St Walstan of Bawburgh, Norfolk, according to lives of the latter. Walstan was reputedly born at Blythburgh, Suffolk. The Blyth is a river, and old forms of this name include ‘Blida’. The woman is probably an invention based on the place-name.

M. R. James, ‘Lives of St. Walstan’, *Original Papers of the Norfolk and Norwich Archaeological Society*, 19 (1917), pp. 238–67, at p. 239.

Ealiburh: half-sister to Ecgberht, king of the West Saxons 802–839; widow of Wulfstan, ealdorman of Wiltshire, said to have changed her husband’s foundation of canons at Wilton to a nunnery where she died.

William Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum* 2, ed. John Caley, Henry Ellis and Bulkeley Bandinel (1846), p. 315.

Judith and Salome: English anchoresses at Ober Altaich, Bavaria. Their story is probably based on a folk tale.

*Ex Vita Salomae et Iudith*, ed. O. Holder-Egger, *MGH, Scriptores* 15 (Hannover 1887), p. 847.



Mindred: local saint of East Anglia, probably a mistranscription of Wyntdryth of March (see Appendix A above).

Monegund: said to rest at *Wetedun* but is otherwise unknown. Blair, 'Handlist', suggests that the reference may be to the imported relics of a Frankish saint.

*Hugh Candidus*; Blair, 'Handlist', p. 546.

Osanna: sister to Osred, king of the Northumbrians, buried at Howden, East Yorkshire. Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Cambriae* in *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera*, i. 2, ed. James F. Dimock, Rolls Series 21 f (1868), pp. 24–25.

Pandonia: allegedly a Scottish princess who fled to a nunnery at Eltisley, Cambridgeshire. *Catalogus Sanctorum*; *The Itinerary of John Leland*, ed. Lucy Toulmin Smith (1910), 5, p. 218; church dedication at Eltisley.

Rayne: allegedly patron saint of a church near Crewkerne, Somerset. The church does not survive, but a hill near the town is called St Rayne's Hill.

William Worcestre, *Itineraries*, ed. John H. Harvey (Oxford, 1969), pp. 72, 122.

Sidwell or Sativola: there was an early cult at Exeter, and a legend in which she was beheaded by mowers, a fountain springing up where her blood fell. The names probably derive from scythe/well and OE *sideful*, modest or virtuous.

SRP, no. 38; F. M. Stenton, 'St. Frideswide and her times', *Preparatory to Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. D. M. Stenton (Oxford, 1970), p. 228.

White: traditionally the local saint of Whitchurch, Dorset. The name probably derives from the place-name.

Eilert Ekwall, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Place-Names*, 4th ed. (Oxford, 1960), p. 513. William Worcestre, *Itineraries*, ed. Harvey, pp. 72–122.

## THE PRIORS' SEAL OF THE DOMINICAN FRIARY OF PONTEFRACT AND AN EARLY REPRESENTATION OF ST DOMINIC IN ENGLISH ART

By David Marcombe

*In the late 1990s a metal detectorist discovered a seal matrix which turned out to be that of the prior of the Dominican friary at Pontefract, founded by Edmund de Lacy in 1256. The article explores the subsequent history of the Pontefract friary and how seals were used by the order in England during the Middle Ages. The imagery depicted on the seal is discussed in the context of other Dominican survivals for Yorkshire. The conclusion of the paper is that the central figure is an early representation of St Dominic, perhaps the earliest in English medieval art.*

In the late 1990s a bronze seal matrix, of ecclesiastical type, was discovered by a metal detectorist near Cottingham in the East Riding of Yorkshire. Quite quickly, it changed hands at least three times in the antiquities trade. I became aware of its existence from the first dealer who had purchased it, Alf Casey, from Holton-le-Clay, North Lincolnshire, but by then it had been sold; however, after some determined detective work, I was able to track it down and buy it from the third, Richard Gladdle, who is based in London. The matrix turned out to be in good condition and it did not take long to decipher its Lombardic-style inscription: S'PRIORIS: FRATRU: PREDICATORU: POT'FRACTI (Fig. 1). Expanded and translated this means 'Seal of the Prior of the Friars Preachers of Pontefract', the Friars Preachers being the correct designation of the Dominicans, or Black Friars, founded by St Dominic in Spain and approved as an order within the Catholic church by Honorius III in 1216. They were close contemporaries of the Franciscans, or Friars Minor, though the two orders came to differ quite considerably in terms of their evangelical emphasis.

The Dominican presence in England dated from 1221 when St Dominic sent Gilbert de Fresney to establish the English Province. Initial bases were set up at Oxford and London and from these the Dominicans rapidly branched out into important urban centres such as Norwich, York and Bristol. By 1250 there were twenty-four houses; and by 1300 this had expanded to forty-eight. Yorkshire had five of these: York (1227), Beverley (1240), Scarborough (1252), Pontefract (1256) and Yarm (1266). The spread of the Dominicans was encouraged by a growing appetite for preaching — especially in the burgeoning towns — and by the support of Henry III, whose half-brother, Bartholomew, was himself a member of the order.<sup>1</sup> They were the most scholarly of the friars and before long had all but cornered the market as university teachers and confessors. Indeed, between 1265 and 1410 the confessor of the English king was invariably a Dominican.

Pontefract, Yorkshire's penultimate Dominican foundation, was established by Edmund de Lacy, son of John de Lacy, earl of Lincoln, whose family had founded the Cluniac priory in the town in 1090.<sup>2</sup> Edmund had been taught by Richard de Wych, bishop of

<sup>1</sup> B. Jarrett, *The English Dominicans* (London, 1937), p. 175; W. A. Hinnebusch, *The Early English Friars Preachers* (S. Sabina, Roma, 1951), pp. 55, 62, 72–73.

<sup>2</sup> Hinnebusch, *Friars Preachers*, p. 96.



Chichester, who died in 1253 and who was canonised in 1262. Wych had been trained in theology by the Dominicans at Orleans and was deemed to be 'a model diocesan bishop'.<sup>3</sup> The process for his canonisation was opened in 1256 and to assist this, Ralph de Bocking, the bishop's Dominican confessor, wrote a *Vita* and Edmund de Lacy determined to found a friary on his estates in his tutor's honour. The scheme was probably devised in 1253 and reached fruition in 1256, the friary church being dedicated to St Mary, St Dominic and St Richard, the only known instance of a dedication to St Richard of Chichester in England. The story is told of how de Lacy's foundation stone split into three pieces, a sign of divine approval of the triple dedication.<sup>4</sup>

The friary at Pontefract was founded on a six-acre site at East Crofts on the south-west edge of the town near the intersection of the roads from Darrington and Wakefield. It seems to have been an ideal spot, and in order to secure its ownership from the town de Lacy was obliged to give twenty-six acres elsewhere in recompense. The endowment expanded only a little after this initial grant, with further small gifts being recorded in 1308 and 1342.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, this was sufficient to support a community of about thirty friars, a little less than the Dominican average of thirty-seven.<sup>6</sup>

Because of its position next to a strategically important castle and the Great North Road, the friary sometimes figured in national events, especially in the early-fourteenth century. In 1300, for example, Edward I stayed twice at the friary *en route* for Scotland and he gave the friars gifts of money and food as well as compensation for damage done by the ill-disciplined royal party.<sup>7</sup> In 1334 and 1335 Edward III made three further visits, once more in the context of trouble north of the border.<sup>8</sup> But the most dramatic event in the friary's history took place in 1322. In that year Thomas, earl of Lancaster, and his supporters held a council of war in the friars' hall where the fateful decision was taken, against the wishes of the earl, to march to Boroughbridge. Following his defeat there by Edward II, Lancaster was attended by a Dominican friar — probably from Pontefract — when he was executed at St Thomas's Hill, just outside the town, on 22 March 1322.<sup>9</sup>

Despite the fact that Earl Thomas was buried at Pontefract's Cluniac priory, which reaped the rewards of the modest cult which became attached to his memory, the friars became the custodians of other significant bodies, or *viscerae*, which were recorded by John Wriothesley, Garter King of Arms, in 1500. Amongst these were the hearts of their founder, Edmund de Lacy, and of three notable Yorkists killed or executed as a result of the battle of Wakefield in 1460 — Richard, duke of York, Edmund, earl of Rutland, and Richard Neville, earl of Salisbury.<sup>10</sup> Not only did the great and the good wish their mortal remains to be deposited in the friary, a whole range of lesser people also supported it by making bequests in their wills, a feature which remained strong right up to the Reformation.<sup>11</sup>

The end for Pontefract Friary came on 26 November 1538 when the last prior, Robert Daye, along with six friars and one novice surrendered the house into the hands of Henry

<sup>3</sup> D. H. Farmer, *The Oxford Dictionary of Saints* (Oxford, 1992), p. 416.

<sup>4</sup> Hinnebusch, *Friars Preachers*, p. 96.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*; *Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1307–1313*, p. 195; *1340–1343*, p. 530.

<sup>6</sup> Hinnebusch, *Friars Preachers*, p. 274.

<sup>7</sup> M. Goldthorp, 'The Franciscans and Dominicans in Yorkshire. Part II. The Black Friars', *YAJ*, 32 (1934–1936), p. 399.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 400.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 401.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 403–04.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 401–03.





Fig. 1. Impression from the Cottingham matrix (obverse).



Fig. 2. The Cottingham matrix (reverse).



Fig. 3. The Cottingham matrix: symbol above corbel (enlargement).



VIII's commissioners.<sup>12</sup> The fact that the king's agents 'perceived no murmur or grudge in any behalf, but were thankfully received' demonstrates how far the community, and others like it, had moved since the optimistic days of the thirteenth century.<sup>13</sup> The friary's annual value was put at only £3 13s. 4d., with an additional £5 10s. 4d. being raised by the commissioners as a result of the sale of its fixtures and fittings. Out of this Daye received an annual pension of 13s. 4d. and each friar 5s.<sup>14</sup> This was certainly not enough to keep body and soul together and Daye, for one, was probably serving as a chantry priest at Lumby, near Sherburn, in 1545.<sup>15</sup>

Following the Dissolution the friary buildings decayed and by the nineteenth century the site had been entirely lost track of. The early-nineteenth-century antiquary, George Fox, suggested it was to the east of the present Valley Gardens, but Richard Holmes, writing in 1891, disagreed and placed it further to the west. The Ordnance Survey followed Holmes's judgement, and when Pontefract General Infirmary was constructed in the late-nineteenth century it was laid out on top of Fox's proposed site. This turned out to be an unfortunate mistake. By the 1920s human remains and building materials were coming to light in the hospital compound, a trend which was to continue with disturbing regularity throughout the twentieth century.<sup>16</sup> Though limited excavations were permitted in 1963, 1977 and 1989, local historians were critical of what they considered to be the hospital's arbitrary approach to the town's heritage. Being exempt from planning procedures, the hospital authorities were making no proper provision for archaeological evaluation work when extensions and improvements were carried out. Consequently, according to Ian Roberts, Pontefract's Dominican friary is 'a site essentially lost through circumstances which have . . . contrived to preclude any proper investigation of it'.<sup>17</sup> Though geophysical surveys have recently indicated there may be survivals outside the main hospital area, the unsatisfactory history of the site underlines the need for even fragmentary discoveries, such as the Cottingham matrix, to be properly recorded.<sup>18</sup>

The Dominican order was highly centralised and was subject to its own superiors under the authority of the Pope. England was governed by a provincial chapter which, for the purposes of administrative convenience, divided the country up into areas called 'visitations'. Pontefract was probably part of the York visitation which covered northern England and comprised the houses of York, Lincoln, Newcastle, Lancaster, Scarborough, Yarm, Carlisle, Bamburgh, Beverley and Boston.<sup>19</sup> Each of these convents had the power to elect its own prior, though his appointment had to be confirmed at provincial level. Once elected, the prior was the main executive officer of the house, responsible for discipline and the oversight of administration, but his power was limited by the requirement to work along with his conventual chapter in all important matters. For example, there was a group of 'councillors' selected from the chapter to advise him; and when he

<sup>12</sup> The friars who surrendered the house were Robert Daye (prior), Dr Richard Lorde, Henry Chanlar, George Lesbere, Andrew Nyk, William Bramla, Thomas Rawlyng and William Chanlar (novice). *Monks, Friars and Nuns in Sixteenth Century Yorkshire*, ed. C. Cross and N. Vickers, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series, 110 (1995), p. 426.

<sup>13</sup> Goldthorp, *YAJ*, 32, p. 404.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 405.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 427. James Thwaites, former prior of the Pontefract Cluniacs, left him £3 5s. 0d. to pray for his soul. Cross and Vickers, *Monks, Friars and Nuns*, p. 426.

<sup>16</sup> I. Roberts, 'Obituary? Pontefract Friary', in *Medieval Yorkshire*, No.18 (1989), pp. 25–28.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*; see also, *The Dominican Friary, Pontefract. Assessment and Project Design*, West Yorkshire Archaeology Service (February 1996).

<sup>19</sup> Hinnebusch, *Friars Preachers*, pp. 210–11, 213.



went off to the provincial chapter, as was his entitlement, he was supposed to take with him one of his brethren as a *socius*.<sup>20</sup>

St Dominic envisaged the prior living as a part of his community, not separate from it like many of his monastic counterparts, and as Galbraith states, 'the prior was not the master but rather the servant of the community'.<sup>21</sup> Though this ideal was not always achieved in reality, his post was certainly not regarded as permanent and a fairly common pattern was for Dominican priors to remain in office for a few years before moving on elsewhere. Indeed, it was quite common for priors not to be members of the community which elected them, enhancing the notion of the order as a provincial brotherhood rather than a group of religious permanently locked into a particular convent.<sup>22</sup> The two medieval priors of Pontefract for whom any information survives confirm that holders of the office were expected to travel. Oliver Deyncourt, prior in 1269, was probably the same man who turns up as prior of York in 1275. The other, John de Thorpe, appears in less creditable circumstances as one of a group of men accused of assaulting William Hardy at York in January 1320.<sup>23</sup>

The administrative arrangements of the Dominicans were reflected by their seals. A charter of 1287, relating to the London friary, has three seals on it — the provincial seal; the conventual seal; and the priors' seal. The provincial seal showed St Paul, 'evidently the patron of the English Dominican province', but the conventual and priors' seals were variable from house to house, displaying motifs appropriate to their place of origin.<sup>24</sup> This was a practice very similar to that employed by the Franciscans. Because priors changed so rapidly and because the Dominican ethos was to diminish their individual stature, their seals tended to be generic, unlike the highly personal seals often employed by the heads of monastic houses. Galbraith concludes that priors' seals were used for the execution of 'official letters', leaving the conventual seal free for documents of a legal nature that affected the community as a whole.<sup>25</sup> Certainly the Franciscans issued letters of confraternity under the seals of guardians (the Franciscan equivalent of Dominican priors) and it is clear that the Dominicans followed a similar practice.<sup>26</sup> On this basis, priors' seals must have had a long life and 'would probably remain in the house and be handed down from prior to prior'.<sup>27</sup>

According to the listings given in the Public Record Office *Catalogue of Monastic Seals* and the *Victoria County History*, only the impressions of two priors' seals exist for the county of Yorkshire. One of these relates to the convent at York and bears the impression of Christ and St Mary Magdalen, the latter saint being the dedication of the house.<sup>28</sup> The other relates to Beverley and is a complex and controversial case. In 1887 when Walter de Gray Birch published the first volume of his influential *Catalogue of Seals in the Department of Mss in the British Museum*, he included the priors' seal of Beverley, incorrectly describing

20. G. R. Galbraith, *The Constitution of the Dominican Order, 1216 to 1360* (Manchester, 1925), pp. 111–23.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 115.

22. *Ibid.*, pp. 120–23.

23. Goldthorp, *YAJ*, 32, pp. 399, 400, 426–27. In 1269 Deyncourt was one of four arbitrators in a dispute between the priors of Pontefract (Cluniac) and Monk Bretton.

24. Galbraith, *Constitution of the Dominican Order*, pp. 116–17; C. F. R. Palmer, 'The Friar Preachers, or Black Friars of Beverley', *Yorkshire Archaeological and Topographical Journal*, 7 (1882), p. 41.

25. Galbraith, *Constitution of the Dominican Order*, p. 117.

26. 'The Seals of the Franciscans', ed. H. S. Kingsford, in *Franciscan History and Legend in English Mediaeval Art*, ed. A. G. Little (Manchester, 1937), pp. 87, 96; Rev. Prebendary Clark-Maxwell, 'Some Further Letters of Fraternity', *Archaeologia*, 79 (1929), pp. 209–10.

27. Galbraith, *Constitution of the Dominican Order*, p. 117.

28. *Catalogue of Seals in the Public Record Office. Monastic Seals, I*, comp. R. H. Ellis (London, 1986), p. 103; *Victoria County History. Yorkshire*, ed. W. Page (London, 1913), 3, p. 285. The York friary had an outstanding relic, the hand of St Mary Magdalen.



the central figure as St Dominic, an identification that was followed by the *Victoria County History* in 1913 and Goldthorp in 1936.<sup>29</sup> This was an unnecessary error, since in 1882 the Yorkshire antiquary the Revd C. F. R. Palmer had correctly identified the Beverley priors' seal as showing St Paul and in 1928 Clay, ignoring Birch, took the same view.<sup>30</sup> The Public Record Office *Catalogue of Monastic Seals* gets the right saint (Paul not Dominic), but states, incorrectly, that this is a common seal not a priors' seal.<sup>31</sup> The example illustrates how the positive identification of medieval seals can be fraught with difficulties, even in scholarly publications the reliability of which one would normally take for granted. Apart from these two, the only other survivals for Yorkshire are impressions of the conventual seals of Yarm and York, and, before the present discovery, no matrix was known for any of the five Yorkshire houses.<sup>32</sup>

The Cottingham matrix is of vesica shape and measures 43 mm x 26 mm. It is of plain design and the reverse is characterised by a simple loop for suspension rising from a ridge which runs the length of the matrix (Fig. 2). The obverse inscription is in Lombardic capitals, a form of lettering which was developing during the twelfth century, reached perfection in the thirteenth and endured until the late-fourteenth century.<sup>33</sup> In the centre of the design there is a tonsured figure dressed in a long cloak, his left hand (somewhat awkwardly positioned) holding a staff that terminates in a plain cross. A right hand, very faintly engraved, protrudes from an opening in the side of the cloak and appears to be holding a flower or branch. The engraver has clearly had problems dealing with the arms and relating them to the large cloak. In reality, the cloak would have been pushed aside to give freedom of movement to the hands, but the engraver has lacked the confidence to illustrate this in anything like a life-like fashion. The figure stands on a small corbel, immediately above which, between the feet of the figure, is a clearly engraved symbol of obscure character, similar to the quasi-geometric patterns sometimes encountered on medieval pilgrims' *ampullae* (Fig. 3).

If this is the priors' seal, does this image represent the prior of Pontefract or some other individual connected with the foundation or the order? Though it was fairly common for abbots and priors of monastic houses to have representations of themselves on their seals, this is unlikely for the Dominicans given all that we know about the nature of their priorate.<sup>34</sup> Like the Franciscans, they would have discouraged any suggestion of a personality cult and, given the rapid turnover of priors, it would not have made much economic sense either, since matrices would have to have been continually re-engraved. There is some evidence that Franciscan guardians' seals occasionally responded to the dictates of fashion, but it can hardly have been a regular occurrence.<sup>35</sup>

Yet the figure on the Cottingham matrix has all of the appearance of a Dominican friar. He wears the huge cloak, or *capa negra*, peculiar to the Black Friars and the cross is clearly intended to be a preaching cross which could be set up anywhere to indicate that a travelling friar was expounding the word of God. St Francis is frequently shown

<sup>29</sup> W. de G. Birch, *Catalogue of Seals in the Department of Mss in the British Museum* (London, 1887), 1, no. 2638, p. 444; *VCH. Yorkshire*, 3, p. 264; Goldthorp, *YAJ*, 32, p. 395.

<sup>30</sup> Palmer, *YATJ*, 7, pp. 40–41; C. Clay, 'The Seals of the Religious Houses of Yorkshire', *Archaeologia*, 78 (1928), p. 12, Plate 1, 3.

<sup>31</sup> Ellis, *Catalogue of Seals*, p. 9.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 102–03; *VCH. Yorkshire*, 3, pp. 283, 287.

<sup>33</sup> H. S. Kingsford, 'The Epigraphy of Medieval English Seals', *Archaeologia*, 79 (1929), p. 165.

<sup>34</sup> For the monastic tradition, see, for example, the seal of John de Thyenges, prior of Lewes. Ellis, *Catalogue of Seals*, p. 51 (Plate 48).

<sup>35</sup> Kingsford in *Franciscan History and Legend*, p. 92.



in early representations with such an *accoutrement*.<sup>36</sup> If the piece of foliage in the right hand is supposed to be a lily (and it is too faint for any conclusive diagnosis to be made), it points firmly to St Dominic himself since he had a special devotion to the Virgin Mary and is traditionally associated with this motif in art. The symbol between the feet is more difficult to interpret, but at least three possibilities present themselves. First, a monogram of the initials P.N., presumably representing Pontefract. Second, a version of the swastika, an ancient symbol of good fortune which was certainly incorporated into the Christian church. Third, and most likely, the sacred monogram 'ihs', though with the 's' somewhat obscured. It is just possible that the device represents a roughly cut representation of a small creature, perhaps holding an upright object in one of its front paws. This last interpretation, though highly speculative, fits well with the iconography traditionally associated with St Dominic, a dog holding a torch, 'a pun (*Domini canis*) on the name of Dominic and the Dominicans'.<sup>37</sup>

So, if this is not supposed to be an English friar, it leaves the distinct probability (even ignoring the controversial evidence of the symbol) that the image is that of St Dominic himself, founder of the order and one of the three saints to whom the house at Pontefract was dedicated. In 1250 the general chapter of the order exhorted its members to put their churches under the patronage of St Dominic, who had been canonised in 1234, and this injunction would have been fresh in the mind of de Lacy when he first contemplated his foundation at Pontefract in 1253.<sup>38</sup> Depicting St Dominic on the priors' seal — and perhaps the conventual seal too — would have been an obvious and highly visible way of promoting the cult. All of the evidence we have from other Dominican seals is that patron saints appear to have been the preferred option and there is no reason to suppose that Pontefract broke step with this tradition.<sup>39</sup>

Though the date range of the seal, on style, must be *c.* 1250–1350, there are certain arguments for placing it closer to the earlier part of that period than later. Stylistically the Cottingham matrix bears certain similarities to the Franciscan conventual seal of Chester, which certainly dates from the thirteenth century. Both are somewhat heavy and angular in their execution, lacking the sense of movement evident on later seals.<sup>40</sup> Moreover, when the house was set up, in 1256, there would have been an immediate need for two official seals — a conventual seal and a priors' seal — and one must assume that these would have been engraved, carefully looked after and passed on to new officials as they took over their offices. Unless the priors' seal was somehow lost or destroyed, there was no need to have commissioned a replacement. Indeed, the original seals may well have done service right up to the Dissolution and in some religious houses (for example, the Franciscan friary at Chester) there is clear evidence that they did.<sup>41</sup>

If the Cottingham matrix has a representation of St Dominic dating to *c.* 1256 then it has implications for representations of this saint in medieval English art. English representations of St Dominic are rare, the earliest known example being on the recently restored Thornham Parva retable preserved in the church of that place, near Eye, in Suffolk.<sup>42</sup> The retable, which shows Dominic with a book in his right hand and a preach-

<sup>36</sup> Francis is only rarely depicted on seals. For the preaching cross, see Little, *Franciscan History and Legend*, Chapter 1 (Plate 1); Chapter 4 (Plate 15).

<sup>37</sup> Mrs Jameson, *Legends of the Monastic Orders as represented in the Fine Arts* (London, 1891), pp. 362, 264; Farmer, *Saints*, p. 134.

<sup>38</sup> Hinnebusch, *Friars Preachers*, pp. 153–54.

<sup>39</sup> See, for example, the conventual and priors' seals of the Dominican house at York. *VCH. Yorkshire*, 3, p. 287.

<sup>40</sup> Kingsford in *Franciscan History and Legend*, p. 88 (Plate III, 3).

<sup>41</sup> The Chester seal appears on a document of 1528. Kingsford in *Franciscan History and Legend*, p. 88.

<sup>42</sup> Hinnebusch, *Friars Preachers*, pp. 149–50. Hinnebusch suggests that the retable was painted between 1300 and 1320 and possibly originated from the friary at Dunwich or Yarmouth.



ing cross in his left, is thought to have come from the Dominican house at Thetford, Norfolk, and to have been commissioned in about 1336.<sup>43</sup> Stylistically, of course, it is infinitely superior to the Cottingham matrix, but it comes at the latter end of the possible date range for the Yorkshire piece and the iconography is subtly different. Though the preaching cross is a characteristic of both representations, the Cottingham matrix shows Dominic's right hand raised in blessing, not holding a book as at Thornham Parva. This may indicate that by the fourteenth century the activities of the order were perceived to be as much about scholarship as about preaching and certainly critics of both the Franciscans and the Dominicans highlighted a drift away from their founding ideologies as a matter of concern in the late Middle Ages. Perhaps the Cottingham matrix is not only the earliest surviving representation of St Dominic in England, but also a statement of the pristine values of the order before the quagmire of scholasticism had taken its toll on Dominic's simple zeal to teach and to convert.<sup>44</sup>

The final question concerns the possible reasons for a Pontefract seal matrix ending up more than forty miles away at Cottingham. Though it is not uncommon for medieval ecclesiastical seal matrices to be discovered a long way away from their place of origin, it is, nevertheless, a difficulty which does raise certain questions.<sup>45</sup> In this case the key point may well be the fact that Cottingham is less than five miles away from Beverley where another Dominican friary was located. It might be tempting to see the loss as part of the destruction of the Dissolution — Henrician commissioners with bags full of confiscated seals lazily making their way around the country and losing the odd one as they went along. Unfortunately, the known facts do not bear out this appealing scenario. Pontefract surrendered to Sir George Lawson and Richard Bellasis on 26 November 1538. Beverley soldiered on for a further three months and gave itself up to Richard Ingworth, suffragan bishop of Dover, on 26 February 1539.<sup>46</sup> It is unlikely that Ingworth went anywhere near Pontefract, since he outlined his intended itinerary (Grimsby, Hull, Beverley, Scarborough, Carlisle and Lancaster) in a letter to Cromwell two days earlier.<sup>47</sup>

A more plausible interpretation is that the seal was lost as part of the gyrations that characterised the medieval Dominican order. Pontefract and Beverley were probably part of the same northern 'visitation', which would have required regular movement of personnel between houses, and there are records of general chapters, of the entire English province, being held at Beverley in 1286 and 1324.<sup>48</sup> Of course, it may well be that there were unrecorded rules which prevented the removal of seals from friaries, but, if there were, these are more likely to have held good for conventual seals than priors' seals, especially in the circumstances of visitations or general chapters when individual priors may have had official business to authenticate. Apart from the possibility of a post-Dissolution loss, the loss of this seal by some medieval prior journeying between Pontefract and Beverley might seem to be the most likely explanation of its final resting place at Cottingham.

<sup>43</sup> E. Duffy and H. Weinstein, 'The Miracle in the Stable', *Daily Telegraph*, 13 February 2000.

<sup>44</sup> The theory must be treated with caution because the earliest representation of St Dominic shows him holding a book but no preaching cross. L. von Matt and M-H. Vicaire, *St Dominic* (London, 1957), Plate 159.

<sup>45</sup> For a discussion of a comparable case, see, D. Marcombe, 'The Confraternity Seals of Burton Lazars Hospital and a newly discovered matrix from Robertsbridge, Sussex', *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society*, 76 (2002), pp. 47–58. Kingsford notes the discovery of three English monastic matrices in Ireland. Kingsford in *Franciscan History and Legend*, p. 92.

<sup>46</sup> Cross and Vickers, *Monks, Friars and Nuns*, p. 425, which also provides some details of the last prior of Beverley, Robert Hill.

<sup>47</sup> Palmer, *YATJ*, 7, p. 42; *VCH. Yorkshire*, 3, p. 264.

<sup>48</sup> Galbraith, *Constitution of the Dominican Order*, p. 263; *VCH. Yorkshire*, 3, p. 263. The general chapter is recorded twice at Pontefract, in 1303 and 1321. Galbraith, *Constitution of the Dominican Order*, pp. 264, 265.



## CANONS AND HERMITS: THE CHAPEL OF ST SIMON AND ST JUDE, COVERDALE

By E. A. Jones

*The article brings together a variety of evidence relating to the hermits of the chapel of St Simon and St Jude in Coverdale, and in particular for the relationship between the hermits and the Premonstratensian Coverham Abbey. In addition to the extant remains of the chapel, a sixteenth-century property dispute is examined which provides some incidental evidence for the identity and situation of the hermits in the years before the Reformation; a rule for hermits found in a manuscript of similar date which belonged to a canon of Coverham is also examined. A transcription of the rule is provided in an appendix.*

Ever since their (more or less) simultaneous emergence from the eastern deserts, the relationship between solitary hermits and coenobitic monks has been a close one. It has also been a complex — and at times somewhat strained — relationship, its dynamic subject to considerable historical change.

In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the eremitic ideal provided the impetus behind the great era of monastic renewal which broke the monopoly of Cluniac Benedictinism over the coenobitic life and issued in the new orders of Cîteaux, Chartres and Premontr  , to name only the most successful.<sup>1</sup> In the later Middle Ages, the vocation of the hermit was, with a few notable exceptions, a less exalted one. Without the authority of full canonical status, the hermit was very often seen as the poor relation of the regular clergy, one whose more-or-less unsupervised existence was open to a whole range of abuses. Langland, whose catalogue of these abuses has been much quoted, calls the hermit ‘an order by hymselfe’;<sup>2</sup> and it is the consequent diversity of eremitical experience and the independence of individual hermits which has rightly been stressed in those studies of the vocation which have been made.<sup>3</sup> Towards the close of the Middle Ages, however, attempts were made both to clamp down on the abuse of eremitic status, and to provide more systematically for the spiritual needs of the genuine hermit.<sup>4</sup> In the fifteenth century, formal ceremonies of consecration begin to be recorded in bishops’ pontificals, and written rules for hermits start to appear.<sup>5</sup> In some cases, this must have represented the full extent of the interaction between hermits and the authorities. The suspicion remains,

<sup>1</sup> This movement is described by Henrietta Leyser, *Hermits and the New Monasticism*, New Studies in Medieval History (London, 1984). For a more local perspective, see Janet E. Burton, ‘The Eremitical Tradition and the Development of Post-Conquest Religious Life in Northern England’, *Trivium*, 26 (1991), pp. 18–39.

<sup>2</sup> *Piers Plowman*, B-text, ed. A. V. C. Schmidt (London, 1987), XIII:284. Langland’s strongest satirical comments on hermits come in the C-Text, ed. D. Pearsall, (corr. ed., Exeter, 1994): see especially IX: 188–218. See further my ‘Langland and Hermits’, *Yearbook of Langland Studies*, 11 (1997), pp. 67–86.

<sup>3</sup> The most useful guide to hermit-life in medieval England is still R. M. Clay, *The Hermits and Anchorites of England* (London, 1914). I am completing the revision, begun by Miss Clay and continued by Basil Cottle, of *Hermits and Anchorites*.

<sup>4</sup> The 1388 confirmation of the Statute of Labourers, for example, excludes from prosecution for vagrancy only those hermits bearing letters testimonial from their ordinary: *Statutes of the Realm* (10 vols, London, 1810–1824), II, p. 58. I am engaged in a longer study of these twin processes.

<sup>5</sup> See V. Davis, ‘The Rule of Saint Paul, the First Hermit, in Late Medieval England’, in *Monks, Hermits and the Ascetic Tradition*, Studies in Church History 22, ed. W. Sheils (Oxford, 1985), pp. 203–14; Clay, *Hermits and Anchorites*, pp. 85–90.



however, that there may have existed, alongside or often in place of such formal provision, a network of spiritual relationships providing for the pastoral care of the otherwise dangerously isolated hermit.

Evidence for the existence and nature of such relationships is, however, scant indeed. We have a number of hermitages, the date(s) of whose occupancy are, however, notoriously difficult to determine. There is a handful of hermits' rules extant, but even where we have evidence of their ownership by a religious house or secular priest, it is another matter to try to discover the identity of the hermit(s) in whose direction they might have been employed.<sup>6</sup> Rarest of all is anecdotal evidence of real, human connections between coenobitic institutions and individual hermits. Where we can link together a site, a text, and evidence of human interrelations, then, such a case commands our close attention. At the North Yorkshire chapel which is the focus of the present article, the extant remains may be connected with one of the more detailed of the surviving hermits' rules, and an Elizabethan property dispute heard in the Court of the Exchequer provides incidentally some insight into the lives and relationships of the early sixteenth-century hermits. Although much of the evidence here discussed has been noticed before, it has not previously been brought together, nor its importance for the history of late-medieval eremitism recognised.

## I

The chapel of St Simon and St Jude is situated in woodland on the south bank of the River Cover, a couple of miles above Coverham, reached by a steep descent from East Scafton and lying a little less than a mile from Melmerby to the north-west (Fig. 1). There is a modern bridge over the Cover a little up river on the site of the earlier St Simon's Bridge. Directly adjoining the chapel, however, is the site of an ancient ford, communicating with a track known as St Simon's Wath, the relatively greater peril of this means of crossing the river perhaps reflected in the dedication of the chapel to two fisherman saints.<sup>7</sup> A little further to the south-west of the chapel is a well, known as St Simon's Well, which, up until the dissolution, was an object of pilgrimage as one of the Middle Ages' many holy wells. (See Fig. 2.) The chapel was already ruined in the 1580s, when it was the subject of the legal dispute to be discussed below, but enough remains to give the impression of a small but picturesquely situated chapel. The foundations suggest dimensions of approximately 17 metres by 7.5 metres, with a chancel arch some 9.5 metres from the west end. It was visited in the 1930s by Ella Pontefract and Marie Hartley, who described it thus:

The ruins of the chapel, which seems to have been little more than a barn, are overgrown, and ash saplings spring from the midst of them. The site, with wooded scars behind it and a steep bank on the opposite side, has a shut-away feeling. Only the paths which run up from the ford tell of the outside world and traffic which has long since ceased. Tits and golden-crested wrens, their chirruping like the tinkle of an old musical box, flutter in the top branches of the ashes and sycamores beside the river. You can picture the hermit living there, like St Francis, with the birds for company as he tended the chapel.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> The most tantalising parallel to the case discussed here is the epistle of guidance to 'Hew Heremyte' written by Richard Methley of Mount Grace Charterhouse, printed in *English Mystics of the Middle Ages*, ed. B. A. Windeatt (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 265–71. The circumstances of the epistle's composition and — especially — its deployment are, however, unknown.

<sup>7</sup> *Oxford Dictionary of Saints*, ed. D. H. Farmer (3rd edition, Oxford, 1992), s.v. *Wath* is from Scandinavian *vað*, 'ford'. See M. Gelling, *Place-Names in the Landscape* (London, 1984), p. 82.

<sup>8</sup> Ella Pontefract and Marie Hartley, *Wensleydale* (London, 1938), pp. 214–15.



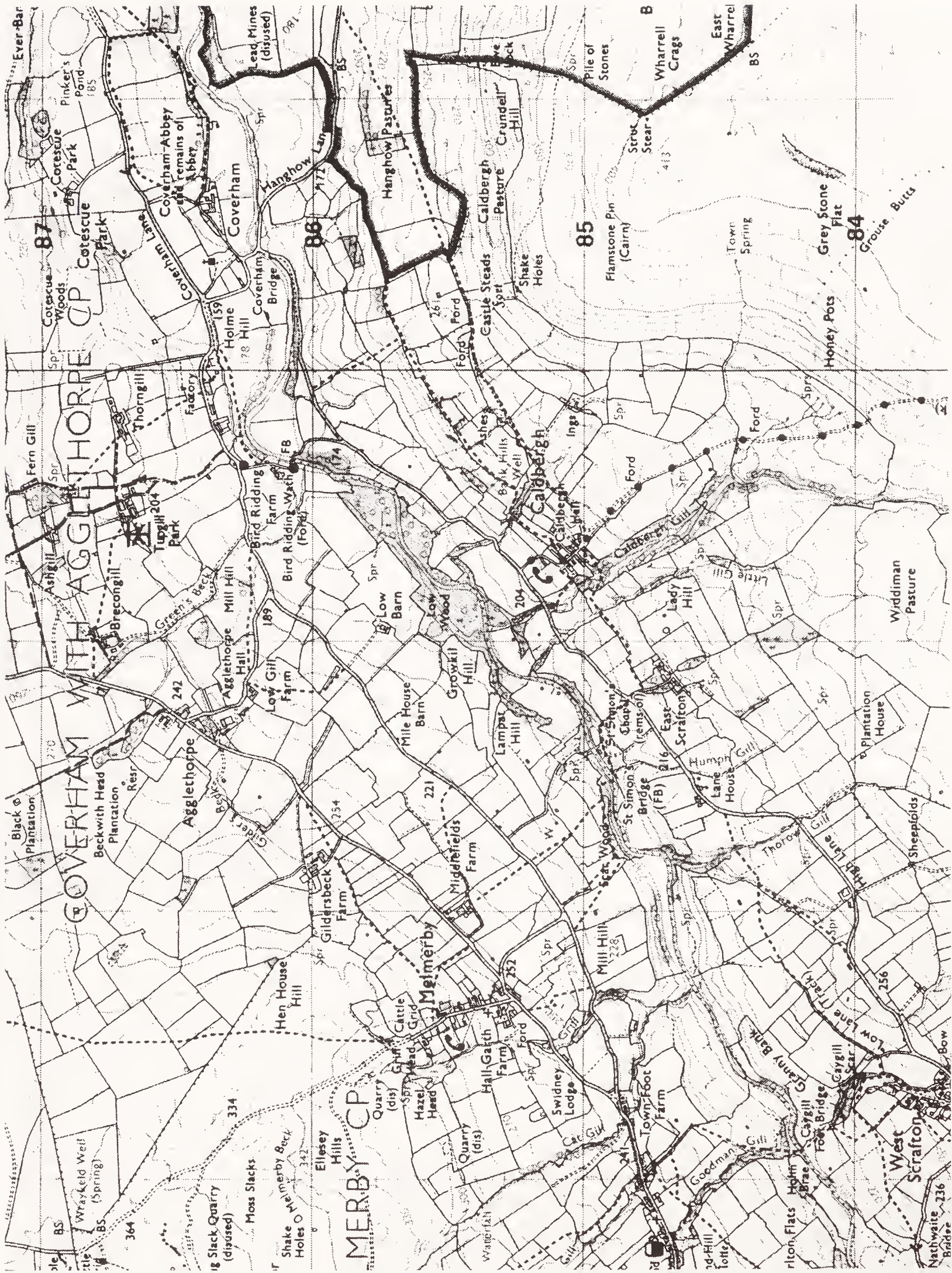


Fig. 1. Part of Coverdale, showing Melmerby, East Scrafton, the chapel of St Simon and St Jude and the site of Coverham Abbey. 1:25 000. © Crown copyright Ordnance Survey. All rights reserved.



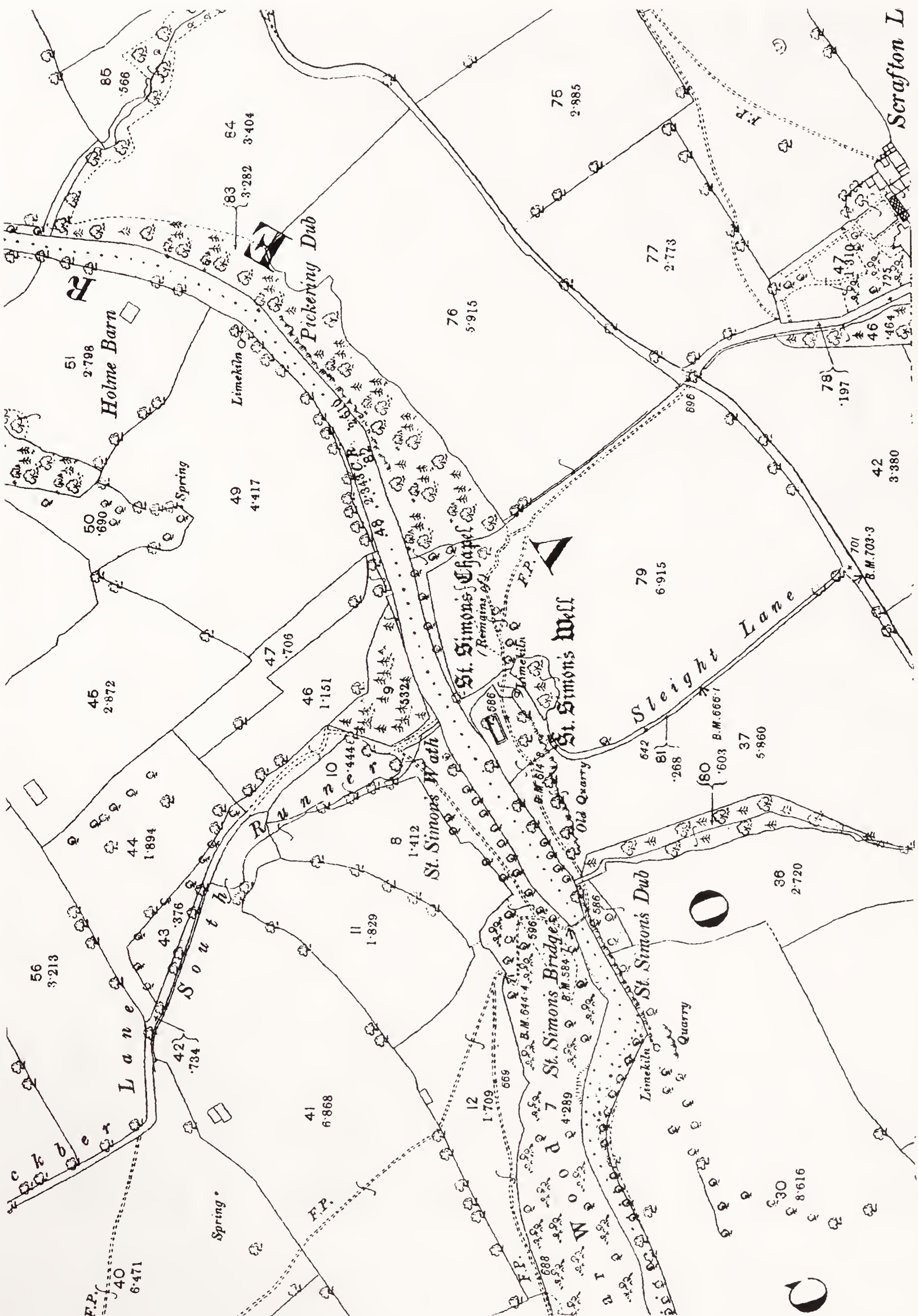


Fig. 2. The chapel of St Simon and St Jude and its environs in 1892. From the first edition of the Ordnance Survey's twenty-five inch map. 1:2500. © Crown copyright and Landmark Information Group Limited 2004.

One is reminded of the words of Aubrey, commenting on another ruined chapel and possible former hermitage in Wiltshire: 'a pleasanter romancy place I know not easily where to find'.<sup>9</sup>

The chapel has come to the attention of the Yorkshire Archaeological Society before. In 1909, members made an excursion to Coverdale to visit Coverham Abbey and the chapel. Although in the event they ran out of time and had to abandon the visit to the chapel itself, the account of the excursion published in the Society's 'Proceedings in 1909' includes both a summary description of the chapel and its site, and brief details of the sixteenth-century court case, communicated by T. M. Fallow, who first noticed its significance.<sup>10</sup> The article on Coverham Abbey by William I'Anson published in the *Journal* in 1920 also included a short notice of the chapel, with several details taken from the same Exchequer dispute.<sup>11</sup> Although both pieces mention the existence of hermits at the chapel, their primary interest lies elsewhere, and they mention them only briefly.

Most of our information concerning the chapel — and all we know of its hermits — comes from the sixteenth century. It first appears, however, in 1328, in a context which suggests that it was already in existence: Sir Ranulph Pigott, lord of Melmerby, obtained a licence to alienate in mortmain certain tenements in Melmerby to the Premonstratensian abbey of Coverham for finding a canon to celebrate divine service daily, for his and his ancestors' souls, in the chapel of St Simon and St Jude, or in the chapel of St Thomas, Melmerby.<sup>12</sup> Pigott was returned as lord of Melmerby in the inquest of 1316; he was also joint tenant of Caldbergh in the parish of Coverham, and held Carlton in Stanwick St John (Gilling West wapentake); he occurs last in 1334.<sup>13</sup> For serving his chantry, Coverham Abbey would have been a natural choice. As a house of regular canons, it was part of the abbey's mission to participate in the cure of souls in the world outside the monastery wall. At the time of Pigott's foundation, the canons provided from among their number vicars of the appropriated churches of Downholme, Kettlewell and Sedbergh, and canons to celebrate in the chapel of Redmire, and at Mary Neville of Middleham's chantry in the chapel of Thoraby, founded in 1316.<sup>14</sup> The chapel of St Thomas, Melmerby, was probably a small private chapel attached to the manor house at Melmerby;<sup>15</sup> subsequent evidence makes it clear that Pigott settled instead upon the chapel of St Simon and St Jude.

## II

A North Yorkshire hermitage of earlier fourteenth-century foundation almost automatically summons up the name of the most celebrated of later-medieval English hermits, Richard Rolle. A link was first suggested in 1927 by Hope Emily Allen, author of the first modern study of Rolle's life and works, who noted the ascription to Rolle of the rule for hermits which will be discussed later in this essay, and which can be connected with

<sup>9</sup> *Wiltshire. The Topographical Collections of John Aubrey*, corr. and enlarged by J. E. Jackson (Devizes, 1862), p. 123, quoted by Clay, *Hermits and Anchorites*, p. 191. The chapel is at Yatton Keynes.

<sup>10</sup> 'Coverham Abbey', *YAJ*, 20 (1909), pp. 482–86, especially pp. 484–86. Here it also states that 'Mr. Fallow intends to publish a transcript of the record in full in a forthcoming volume of the Surtees Society's series' (p. 484). Fallow died in the succeeding year, without the anticipated transcript having appeared. No mention is made of such a transcript in the account of the Fallow papers given in *YAJ*, 21 (1911), pp. 225–53.

<sup>11</sup> W. M. I'Anson, 'Coverham Abbey', *YAJ*, 25 (1920), pp. 273–301, at pp. 278–80.

<sup>12</sup> *Calendar of the Patent Rolls . . . AD 1327–1330* (London, 1893), p. 305. Cf. I'Anson, 'Coverham Abbey', pp. 278–79.

<sup>13</sup> *The Victoria History of the County of York: North Riding*, ed. W. Page (2 vols. plus index, London, 1914–1925) [hereafter *VCH North Riding*], I, pp. 130, 221, 222.

<sup>14</sup> T. M. Fallow, 'The Abbey of Coverham' in *The Victoria History of the County of York*, vol. III, ed. W. Page (London, 1913), pp. 243–45; I'Anson, 'Coverham Abbey', pp. 275–78.

<sup>15</sup> I'Anson, 'Coverham Abbey', p. 280.



Coverham Abbey.<sup>16</sup> Although that ascription has now been shown to be spurious,<sup>17</sup> and although it may be unwise (as it is certainly unfashionable) to speculate on the biographical details of a life which we are obliged to reconstruct from the polemical apologetics of the author and the hagiography of the *Officium* prepared by his Hampole disciples, the suggestion of Rolle's association with the chapel merits a brief excursus.<sup>18</sup>

Richard Rolle was born around the beginning of the fourteenth century at Thornton Dale, near Pickering.<sup>19</sup> He attended Oxford University, under the patronage of Thomas de Neville, but returned home in his nineteenth year without completing a degree. Soon after, he left home to live as a hermit on the estate of a neighbour of his father, John de Dalton, who was constable of Pickering castle. Some time after this, he left the Dalton household and went into Richmondshire. He continued to live as a hermit, with a succession of patrons and at a number of sites, before dying on a visit to the nunnery of Hampole at Michaelmas 1349.

Although he is remembered as the 'Hermit of Hampole', there is no evidence that Rolle was ever (at least in life) attached to the nunnery in any formal way. His principal connection with the house is through a former nun there, Margaret Kirkeby, for whom he wrote his English Psalter and, later, the epistle *The Form of Living*. Kirkeby became an anchoress in late 1348 or 1349, being enclosed at East Layton in Teesdale.<sup>20</sup> Concerning her choice of East Layton, Allen observes that, 'It is probable that since Margaret was being enclosed under Rolle's influence the owners or patrons of her place of enclosure were patrons also of his.'<sup>21</sup> She then points to monuments of the Pigott family, 'lords of manors adjacent to East Layton', in the church of Stanwick, in which parish part of the township of East Layton lies.<sup>22</sup> Although most of Ranulph Pigott's holdings were in Coverdale, we have already seen that in 1316 he held the vill of Carlton in the parish of Stanwick, and he was granted free warren there in 1334.<sup>23</sup> East Layton itself was held at this date by Thomas de Layton of Ralph Lord Neville, who was also Pigott's overlord at Melmerby and father of Rolle's early patron, Thomas de Neville. It was to a member of the Layton family, another Thomas, that a third share of the manor of Melmerby descended in the sixteenth century after the failure of the male line of the Pigotts.<sup>24</sup> Allen uses these connections to suggest that, towards the end of his life, Rolle too had a cell in the vicinity of East Layton: 'Perhaps Margaret came here to be near her master'.<sup>25</sup> It is equally possible that a relationship between Rolle and Pigott (as with the Nevilles) began earlier in the hermit's career, at the chapel of St Simon and St Jude.

A different kind of evidence which might support such a hypothesis is Rolle's recollection, in the Latin work *Contra Amatores Mundi*, of the distress caused him at the death of

<sup>16</sup> H. E. Allen, *Writings Ascribed to Richard Rolle and Materials for his Biography*, Modern Language Association of America Monograph Series 3 (New York, 1927), pp. 324–35; the ascription had earlier been made by C. Horstman, *Yorkshire Writers: Richard Rolle of Hampole and his followers* (2 vols., London, 1895–1896), II, p. xxxvii.

<sup>17</sup> Nicholas Watson, *Richard Rolle and the Invention of Authority*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature 13 (Cambridge, 1991), p. 44 n. 21.

<sup>18</sup> For the dangers of basing any biography of Rolle on the intrinsically interested and conventional sources on which we are forced to rely, see especially Watson, *Richard Rolle and the Invention of Authority*, pp. 31–53.

<sup>19</sup> This account is based on the most conservative modern account, Nicholas Watson's, in his *Richard Rolle: Emendatio vitae; Orationes ad honorem nominis Ihesu*, Toronto Medieval Latin Texts 21 (Toronto, 1995), pp. 6–8; reference has also been made to Allen's *Writings*, pp. 430–526. Watson (p. 7) gives Rolle's birth as occurring in the period 1305–1310, but I can find no reason for his departure from Allen's estimate of 'about 1300 (or slightly earlier) as the approximate year of his birth' (p. 431).

<sup>20</sup> Allen, *Writings*, p. 502.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 504.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 504–05. The foundation of the chapel in Coverdale is noted by Allen at p. 505.

<sup>23</sup> *VCH North Riding*, I, p. 130.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, I, pp. 131, 223.

<sup>25</sup> Allen, *Writings*, p. 505.



the 'great lady' who, with her husband, had provided his sustenance at university, and later maintained him in a cell at some distance from their household, until the husband's death.<sup>26</sup> Allen argues that this cannot be a reference to the wife of John de Dalton, but to someone more properly styled a great lady, such as 'Lady Eleanor Percy, or one of the Scropes or Nevilles'.<sup>27</sup> Jonathan Hughes suggests with plausibility that the woman meant is Margery, wife of Ralph Lord Neville, who died in 1332, a year after her husband.<sup>28</sup> As we have seen, however, it is not Ralph Lord Neville, but his fifth son Thomas, whom the *Officium* names as Rolle's Oxford patron; but he cannot have been Rolle's senior by more than a few years. If it was not the husband, but the son, who was nominally Rolle's patron (and the wife/mother who in reality fulfilled the role), this might perhaps be the reason for the rather odd phrasing of the reference, not straightforwardly to the wife of his patron, but to 'the great lady (*matrona*) of the world who, together with her husband, sustained [him] for several years'.<sup>29</sup> The Nevilles were lords of Middleham, and Ranulph Pigott held the manor of Melmberby of them, by the nominal service of the presentation of a barbed arrow.<sup>30</sup>

The chapel of St Simon and St Jude answers the *Contra Amatores Mundi*'s description of being situated in the lands of his patrons, the Nevilles, but at some distance from Middleham itself. The date of our first record of the chapel also fits. Rolle could have been installed in the chapel in or soon after 1328, perhaps on his arrival in Richmondshire, and would have remained there until the death of Ralph Lord Neville in 1331.

But the blue plaque will have to wait. The chapel is in the right sort of place, at the right sort of time — nothing more. And of course, while we know that it had a hermit in the sixteenth century, there is no mention of one in the fourteenth (though there is no reason why, if there was a hermit, he should have been mentioned in Pigott's licence). It is not until the sixteenth century that a more certain account of the chapel emerges, and the humble existence of the hermits of this later period is a far cry from the zealous idealism and incipient mysticism of the youthful Rolle.

### III

The evidence from this period is of two kinds: a rule for hermits which has links with Coverham Abbey and, less obviously, materials from a sixteenth-century property dispute held among the records of the Exchequer in the Public Record Office. In addition to its more familiar role in fiscal administration, the Exchequer also functioned, between the mid-sixteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries, as an important court of equity.<sup>31</sup> Plaintiffs who could claim that, as a consequence of their own disseisin, the Crown's income (typically rental) was being diminished, were able to bring their grievance before the Barons of the Exchequer in search of an equitable remedy.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 465–66; E. J. F. Arnould, 'On Richard Rolle's Patrons: A New Reading', *Medium Ævum*, 6 (1937), pp. 122–24. *Contra Amatores Mundi*, ed. P. F. Theiner (Berkeley, 1968), p. 94.

<sup>27</sup> Allen, *Writings*, p. 465.

<sup>28</sup> Jonathan Hughes, *Pastors and Visionaries: Religion and Secular Life in Late Medieval Yorkshire* (Woodbridge, 1988), p. 86 and n. 41; *The Complete Peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland, Great Britain and the United Kingdom, extant, extinct or dormant*, ed. G. E. C[okayne], rev. V. Gibbs (15 vols., London, 1910–1940), xi, pp. 497–98.

<sup>29</sup> 'quedam matrona in mundo magna . . . Que et me una cum marito suo per annos nonnullos sustentaverat'; two manuscripts add 'ad seolos': see Theiner, *Contra Amatores Mundi*, p. 94, and for the variants p. 133; Arnould, 'On Richard Rolle's Patrons', *passim*.

<sup>30</sup> I'Anson, 'Coverham Abbey', p. 278 n. 6.

<sup>31</sup> For an account of the history, jurisdiction and procedure of the court, see W. H. Bryson, *The Equity Side of the Exchequer* (Cambridge, 1975); also see his *Cases Concerning Equity and the Courts of Equity 1550–1660*, Selden Society 117–118 (2000–2001), especially pp. xxxii–xxxvii and (for specimen pleadings, chiefly in the Exchequer) pp. 51–88.



Such was the case with the chapel of St Simon and St Jude. Some time in late 1585 or early 1586 Christopher Buckle, gentleman, of Melmerby, initiated proceedings against his neighbour Francis Topham, son and heir of Edward Topham, who died in 1591 seised of the manors of Agglethorpe, Melmerby and East Scafton.<sup>32</sup> Buckle had, he said, been granted the 'ruynous' chapel and the three acres of land pertaining to it by Theophilus Adams, gentleman, and Robert Adams, grocer, of London, who had themselves received it of the Crown by letters patent of 27 July 1583 — a claim corroborated by the recording in the Patent Rolls of the latter grant, which also specifies the rent or feefarm of 20*d.* per annum.<sup>33</sup> Although Buckle had entered into and taken possession of the premises (he continued), subsequently Francis Topham,

of a maliciouse and evill will againste your saide Orator without any manner of good right or lawfull title hath not onlie wrongfullie entred into the saide Ruynous Chappell and recited premisses with appurtenances before expressed & thereof dissesed your saide orator: But also the Issues and proffits thervpon ariseinge Converted and taken to his owne proper vse and the possession thereof still doth detaine & withhold [*MS* withoute] from your saide orator contrarie to all right equitie & good Conscience.

Consequently, Her Majesty would not be receiving rent for the chapel and lands, and it was because of this loss of revenue to the Crown that the case could be heard in the Exchequer. Buckle's repeated 'frindlie' requests to Topham to vacate the premises had all met with rebuttal, and he was, he claimed, now obliged to bring the matter before the Court.<sup>34</sup>

This narrative is contained in Buckle's Bill of Complaint, which initiated the first stage of the suit: the pleadings. The pleadings continued with the defendant's Answer, which begins conventionally by professing Buckle's Bill 'incertayne and insuficient in the lawe to be answered',<sup>35</sup> and in which Topham declares his innocence of, and bewilderment at, the plaintiff's charges. He claims not to know to what chapel and to which three acres Buckle is referring, but rather disingenuously observes that

there is ane chappell in Coverdale within the manor or lordshipp of melmerbie which was maid and ordeyned by the lorde of the mannor of melmerbye for the ease of the people and inhabitants in melmerbie & Scafton & some other places dwellinge farr from ther parish church at Couerham in a movntayn countrie subiect to great stormes & tempestes so that thay cannot at diuers tymes

<sup>32</sup> *VCH North Riding*, 1, p. 220. In addition to any neighbourly rivalry, and the intrinsic value of the chapel and its lands, we may note here, with reference to Fig. 1, that part of the importance of the chapel to the Topham holdings may have been the river crossing associated with it, which would have provided a link between their lands north of the Cover (Agglethorpe and Melmerby) and those on the south at East Scafton. The sources of the following account of the case are the initial pleadings, Exchequer: Bills and Answers, E112/50, no.9; the depositions of witnesses, Exchequer: Depositions, E134/28 Eliz/East 3 and E134/28 Eliz/East 5; and the orders of the court and final judgement recorded in Exchequer: Entry Books of Decrees and Orders, series 1, E123/11, f. 93v; E123/12, ff. 40r, 68v–70v. The originals of the decrees and orders recorded in the Entry Books are not extant (cf. Exchequer: Decrees and Orders, E128/1/22). I hope to publish a fuller account of the case at a later date.

<sup>33</sup> See Chancery: Patent Rolls, C66/1226, m. 1. (There is no calendar of the patent rolls for 24–27 Elizabeth. This reference is, however, given in the index of names printed in the *Draft Calendar of Patent Rolls 27 Elizabeth I*, List and Index Society 241 (1990).) This records the grant to Theophilus Adams, gentleman, of London, and Robert Adams, grocer of the same city, of (*inter alia*) 'totam illam ruinosam capellam nostram cum pertinentiis in Coverham alias Coverdale infra dominium de Mydleham in dicto comitatu nostro Ebor' ac tres acras terre nostras ibidem dicte nuper capelle quondam pertinentes'.

<sup>34</sup> Buckle's Bill of Complaint is E 112/50, no.9, m. 1. In all transcriptions from the Exchequer documents I have expanded abbreviations silently, and where necessary supplied in square brackets conjectural readings for words too badly faded to be legible (this is a particular problem with both sets of depositions). I have silently remedied obvious scribal errors, such as dittography. Manuscript punctuation and capitalisation are retained.

<sup>35</sup> This is a standard form of words used in answers to Bills of Complaint — see Bryson, *Equity Side*, p. 115.



verry hardly passe to ther parishe church at Coverham aforesaid & was a longe tyme maynteyned kept & vsed at the costes & charges of the lorde of the said mannor as a Chappel of ease for the people & inhabitantes aforesaid which this defendant thinkethe to be the chappell in the byll mencioned.

In response to the defence that the chapel was part of the Topham manor of Melmerby, Buckle, in his Replication, set out to clarify the Crown's title to the chapel and its appurtenances by declaring that they were 'parcell of and belonginge to the late dissolued monastery of Couerham', and that 'by reason of the dissolucion of the saide Monastery' the premises 'came to the hands of the late king henry theight', and after him to Mary, and subsequently to 'the Queens maiestie that now ys'. It is in order to demonstrate the dependence of the chapel on Coverham that Buckle introduces information about the hermits. The abbots of Coverham, he says

haue alwaies hadd the placeinge of one to occupie as hermite the saide Chappell & three Acres of Lande & That one moore called by the name of Hermytt moore at the tyme of the dissolucion and suppression of the saide late monestery of Coverham Enioyed the saide Chappell and occupied all the saide three acres of Lande as belonginge to the said Chappell vnder thabbott to his owne vse beinge placed thearin by the saide Abbott theare.<sup>36</sup>

The crux of the matter was, then, whether the chapel had been among the possessions of Coverham before the dissolution, or whether it had formed part of the manor of Melmerby. After a process lasting some six months, the court decided in favour of the plaintiff, Christopher Buckle. The case is a good example of the struggle for property rights over 'concealed land' during the post-dissolution period — that is, over land which had been (or which an unscrupulous speculator might claim to have been) part of the holdings of a religious corporation, and which should therefore, by the acts of dissolution, now be the Crown's or its lessees'.<sup>37</sup> The rights and wrongs of the judgement need not detain us here, though it is worth remarking that, whatever the strength of his position in law, the fact that Buckle received the premises from Theophilus Adams, who was a notorious 'discoverer' of concealed land during this period, may cast a degree of doubt on his claim.<sup>38</sup> The enquirer after details of late-medieval hermits should be grateful only that the dispute reached the courts, and that such a full record of proceedings has survived, to supply much incidental information on them. Most valuable are the depositions of witnesses for the plaintiff and defendant, taken on 6 April 1586 at Coverham and Melmerby respectively. Although, as might be expected, they agree on little that relates directly to the dispute itself, the two sets of witnesses have much in common on the hermits of the chapel and, as they flesh out the statements made by Buckle and Topham in the pleadings, shed further light on their identity and situation.

First of all, they provide more details of the land under dispute. The three acres were made up of three parcels: the land rising steeply on the north side of the Cover was meadowland known as 'Hermit Rigge'; on the south of the river lay 'Hermyt Crosse' and land 'called comonly Chapell garthe'. The three parcels may be identified with reference to Fig. 2. Chapel Garth would have been the land immediately around the chapel, analogous to a churchyard, while a stone cross shown on the six-inch Ordnance Survey map (1856) at the junction of Sleight Lane with the road to Coverham (but gone by 1892) presumably marked the southern boundary of Hermit Cross. Witnesses for both

<sup>36</sup> E 112/50, no.9, m. 3.

<sup>37</sup> On concealed land, see C. J. Kitching, 'The Quest for Concealed Lands in the Reign of Elizabeth I', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th ser., 24 (1974), pp. 63–78; *Yorkshire Chantry Surveys*, ed. W. Page, Surtees Society 91–92 (1892–1893), 1, xiii.

<sup>38</sup> Kitching, 'Quest for Concealed Lands', p. 74.



parties also remembered the Hermit Moore who was in occupation at the dissolution. For the plaintiff, Edward Lofthouse testified 'yat at the tyme of the dissolucion of the . . . monastery of Coverham and a certayne tyme after / one More called Hermyt More did occupy the said chapell and lands nowe in varyence and belonging to the said Chapell.' The defendant's father and principal witness, Edward Topham, similarly declared that 'one hirmitt moore so called had & occupied the said Chapel & groundes . . . duringe his naturall lif', though he was quick to add that the hermit was 'in the occupation therof before the dissolution of the said monastery of the gift and graunt of the then lord of m[elmerby]'. The eighty-four year-old Isabell Mason of Bolton, another of Buckle's witnesses, could remember three hermits 'placed by thabbote of Coverham': Hermit Moore, and two earlier hermits, named Cragges and Brittoner. Both sets of witnesses also agreed on a somewhat surprising new role for the chapel soon after the dissolution. As Edward Lofthouse recalled:

one John Prat did dwell and keepe an Alehouse in . . .<sup>39</sup> the said chapell and sometymes did occupy a parte of the said landes in varyence at the will and permission of the said hermit moore and not otherwise or by any other tittle.

The defence did not deny that John Prat kept his alehouse at the chapel, or that he occupied 'the ground called Chappell garthe', but they did insist that he 'payd Rent for the same to the then lord or lordes of melmerby and after him Symound Prat sone of the said John did occupie the same and payd Rent to the said lord or lordes'. Another defence witness, Margaret Dawson, bore witness that an agent of the lord of Melmerby had been appointed

to assigne and deliuer vnto John Pratt vncle of this exam[inate] then Tennant of the house adioynge to the said Chapell certen tymber [and?] wood growinge in the said hirmitt Cross for the Reparinge or Reedifinge of his dwellinghouse of the same Tenement and for buildinge of a stable then to the said tenement.

This wooden house built up against one end of the chapel was very likely the hermitage itself, since Edward Lofthouse speaks of 'the Hermyts that contynewally did dwelle and inhabet within one ende of the said Chapell'.

The context of this statement is more partisan. As a witness for the plaintiff, the ninety-four year-old Lofthouse needed to establish a connection between the chapel and Coverham Abbey. To this end, he testified

that the Abbots of Coverham (for the tyme beinge) duringe all the tyme of [his] remembrance of lxxx yeares had the placinge and displacinge of the Hermyts that contynewally did dwelle and inhabet within one ende of the said Chapell and [*the abbots*] had all the offeringe and oblations that were ther offered to St Symond and the said Abbots did appoynte one Morysby there Procter to receyve the offerings and candlis yat there were offered to St Symond.

Another of Buckle's witnesses, John Jenken, confirmed that the abbots had the 'placinge and displacinge of the said Hermits', and adds that they 'did comonly vse to send one of the Bretheren of the said monestery euery thursday and fryday yearly to say masse and service in the said Chapell.'

None of this was contradicted by Topham's witnesses. Indeed, the latter testimony is by no means inconsistent with the defence's argument that the chapel was a chapel of ease served by the canons of Coverham, in accordance with Ranulph Pigott's agreement of 1328. That the Abbey held a form of patronage over the hermits need not have

<sup>39</sup>. This part of the manuscript is very badly rubbed and faded. Even with the aid of ultraviolet light, two words are illegible here.



prejudiced Topham's case either, so long as this was not taken to imply that the chapel was a cell dependent upon Coverham. Perhaps for the avoidance of any doubt in this regard, John Rynder, for the defence, stated that 'the . . . hirmitt which kept the said Chappell was a temporall and a poore man and did for the most part live by begging or of the Releife of the . . . Inhabitanter of melmerby & Scrafton'. The interrogatory to which Rynder was responding spoke, apparently uncontentiously, of 'the hirmit which keppt the . . . Chappell cleane'.

#### IV

Such details of the early sixteenth-century hermits are of especial interest because there survives in a manuscript which belonged to a canon of Coverham Abbey of this date an English copy of a rule for hermits — extant elsewhere in two other English versions, and one in its original language of Latin — known as the 'Rule of Celestine'.<sup>40</sup> The manuscript, now in the British Library, is in the commonplace book of John Gysborn (or Gysburgh/Guisborough), who styles himself canon of Coverham.<sup>41</sup> In fact, there were two canons of the name at Coverham in the early sixteenth century. The older man was ordained subdeacon on 3 March 1509, deacon on 22 February 1510, and priest on 14 June 1511; ten years later, on 2 May 1521, he was instituted as vicar of the abbey's appropriated church of Kettlewell.<sup>42</sup> The younger, having proceeded rapidly through minor orders, was ordained priest on 24 September 1524.<sup>43</sup> Neither was yet a member of the abbey in 1500, when, for the purposes of Bishop Redman's visitation of the house, a full list of its personnel was drawn up.<sup>44</sup> The owner of the manuscript did not stay at Coverham, however, for later in his manuscript he calls himself curate of Alington, Lincolnshire, a church appropriated to the Premonstratensian house of Newbo, near Grantham in the same county.<sup>45</sup> His removal to the Lincolnshire house must have taken place by 1529, which is the date of receipts and other documents relating to Newbo Abbey copied by Gysborn into this section of his manuscript.<sup>46</sup>

That his copy of the rule for hermits dates from his period at Coverham seems most likely. Although it comes at the end of the manuscript, it appears to have been copied on a separate quire of its own, and could thus as easily be early work as late.<sup>47</sup> There is no record of any hermitage connected with Newbo, or even in its vicinity, to compare

<sup>40</sup> Item H.10 in P. S. Jolliffe, *A Check-list of Middle English Prose Writings of Spiritual Guidance* (Toronto, 1974). The Latin text on which the rule is based is edited by L. Oliger, 'Regulae tres reclusorum et eremitarum angliae saec. xiii–xiv', *Antonianum*, 3 (1928), pp. 151–90 and 299–320, at pp. 312–20. I am currently preparing a parallel-text edition of the Latin rule and its three independent English derivatives.

<sup>41</sup> British Library, MS Sloane 1584, Commonplace book of John Gysborn. The 'Rule of Celestine' occupies ff. 89r–95v, and is transcribed in the Appendix. Gysborn's reference to himself as canon of Coverham is at f. 12r. Previous discussions of the manuscript are A. G. Dickens, *The English Reformation* (2nd edition, London, 1989), pp. 27–28; G. A. J. Hodgett, *Tudor Lincolnshire*, History of Lincolnshire 6 (Lincoln, 1975), pp. 14–15; J. B. Friedman, *Northern English Books, Owners, and Makers in the late Middle Ages* (New York, 1995), pp. 152–53 and notes.

<sup>42</sup> Claire Cross and Noreen Vickers, *Monks, Friars and Nuns in Sixteenth Century Yorkshire*, YAS Record Series 150 (1995), pp. 353, 355.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 354.

<sup>44</sup> F. A. Gasquet, *Collectanea Anglo-Premonstratensia*, Camden Society, 3rd ser., 6, 10, 12 (1904–1906), at 11, p. 146.

<sup>45</sup> BL, MS Sloane 1584, Commonplace book of John Gysborn, f. 35r. He is not recorded at Alington among those assessed for the fifteenth granted in 1526 (*A Subsidy Collected in the Diocese of Lincoln in 1526*, ed. H. Salter, Oxford Historical Society 63 (1909), p. 70). For the practice of canons transferring to another house of the order, see Gasquet, *Collectanea*, 1, pp. 244–45.

<sup>46</sup> BL, MS Sloane 1584, Commonplace book of John Gysborn, ff. 36v, 87v, 88r.

<sup>47</sup> In the interest of the conservation of the manuscript, its leaves have been remounted and rebound. While it seems most probable that the 'Rule', which is preceded by a blank folio, began a new quire, this cannot now be verified.



with that at the chapel of St Simon and St Jude.<sup>48</sup> The inclusion in the first part of the manuscript, which Gysborn himself declares to have been written during his time at Coverham, of material on the examination of penitents and the reading of the banns suggests that Gysborn took his duties as a secular priest seriously.<sup>49</sup> It does not seem unreasonable to suppose that it was he, perhaps (if he is to be identified with the older John Gysborn) before he was considered ready for the vicarage of Kettlewell, who was appointed by the abbot to go down to the chapel 'euery thursday and fryday yearly to say masse and service in the said Chapell' (as John Jenken had deposed), and that his responsibilities would have extended to attending to the spiritual welfare of the hermit there, and that this is the explanation for the inclusion in his commonplace book of a hermits' rule.

Reading through the rule with this implied audience in mind, we can gain a clearer picture of the day-to-day existence of the hermits of the chapel. (A full transcription of the rule is provided in the Appendix to this article.) It begins by insisting that

Although the estate of hermits is without a rule made by Holy Church, it is nevertheless necessary for every man who has, for the love of our lord Jesus Christ, chosen a life of voluntary poverty, to live in a holy manner.<sup>50</sup>

This is to be achieved by telling the truth, the performance of good works, the keeping of the ten commandments and the practice of the seven works of mercy. The hermit is to owe his obedience first and foremost to God — 'for he is abbot and prior of his cloister — that is to say, of his heart and body' — but also to the bishop of his diocese, and the patron of his hermitage. If his patron is a member of the clergy, he should turn to him for spiritual direction; if not, 'then he should go to the man who made him a hermit, and show his life to him'. (Since in this case it was the abbot of Coverham who apparently 'had the placing and displacing' of the hermit, this stipulation may add weight to the hypothesis that it was Gysborn, as deputy of the abbot, who was responsible for his pastoral care.)

The hermit should make a vow of poverty and of chastity, and give any surplus food and drink to the poor. His vow should be made before a bishop, an abbot or a prior. (Perhaps significantly, the other extant versions of the 'Rule' specify only the bishop here; only Gysborn's text adds the reference to abbot and prior.) He should dress at his discretion, neither too well nor too abjectly, but should ensure that his habit is not so similar to that of any of the established religious orders as to cause confusion. If he wishes, he can wear a hair-shirt under his clothes, provided that 'he is not greatly hindered in his devotion in praying by the biting of the worms that breed under it'. He is encouraged to have a fellow hermit, or failing that a child or servant, for company, but should maintain silence as far as possible, speaking only when necessary, and then 'briefly, with the fear of God'. He should fast three days a week — on Fridays to bread and water — and in Lent, Advent, and before Whitsun and Michaelmas, eating only fish. On the three great feasts of Christmas, Easter and Whitsun, and for the three days following, he may eat meat in his cell; he is also allowed meat on the four days of the week on which he is not required to fast, if he is engaged in bodily labour, but not when he is in his cell. He should occupy himself daily with manual work, 'for idleness is the enemy of a christian man's soul'. (We may note here that plenty of opportunity was afforded the Coverdale

<sup>48</sup> Clay, *Hermits and Anchorites*, pp. 227–28. There is similarly no hermitage in the vicinity recorded among Clay's notes for the revised edition.

<sup>49</sup> Jolliffe, *Check-list*, items E.10, C.34, E.2. For the publishing of the banns, see BL, MS Sloane 1584, Commonplace book of John Gysborn, f. 12r.

<sup>50</sup> Throughout this summary of the 'Rule' the translations are my own.



hermit to eschew idleness: he had his duties as 'caretaker' of the chapel, and his three acres of land to tend.<sup>51</sup>)

As to his spiritual duties, he is required to confess his sins four times in the year (before Christmas, Easter, Whitsun and Michaelmas), and then to receive the Eucharist. A hermit who is a priest is bound each day to say the canonical hours for the day, and to celebrate mass. If, however, 'he is not a priest, or else if he does not sing, then he shall hear a mass as far as he is able'. A 'lewyd heyrmett' (f. 95r) — that is one, like the 'temporal' man of the chapel of St Simon and St Jude, not in religious orders and/or ignorant of Latin — is to substitute for the canonical hours the repetition of the basic prayers of the church: for matins, forty *Pater Nosters* and forty *Ave Marias*; for lauds, sixteen *Paters* and sixteen *Aves*; for prime, twelve of each prayer; the same number for evensong, and nine of each for the remaining canonical hours. In addition, he is to say his Creed three times daily, and three times every night; and for the special intention of his friends and benefactors, thirty *Paters* and thirty *Aves* daily, giving a grand total of 146 *Pater Nosters*, 146 *Ave Marias* and six Creeds every day. Under certain circumstances, however, this requirement could be relaxed. If he is sick or enfeebled, or engaged in heavy labour, he is held only to fifteen *Pater Nosters* and fifteen *Ave Marias* when he rises, and another fifteen of each at the end of the day. This routine he is to maintain for the rest of his life, 'and so end his life with dread off God Almighty'.

## V

The fact that this hermits' rule survives in three other versions allows us to make comparisons among the various texts. This permits us not only to make sense of one or two rather unclear passages in Gysborn's copy, but also to discern significant alterations and shifts of emphasis in the version of the rule designed for the use of the hermit of the chapel of St Simon and St Jude.

We have already seen that Gysborn's text (alone among the extant witnesses) encourages the hermit to make his vows before an abbot or prior, as alternatives to the more usual bishop — natural enough for a man whose 'placing and displacing' was in the hands of the Abbot of Coverham. A more dramatic departure from the usual text of the rule is the omission of a number of chapters. These fall broadly into two classes, although both sets of omissions seem to have been made with the particular status of the Coverdale hermit in mind. He was, we recall from the testimony of John Rynder, 'a temporall and a poore man and did for the most part live by begging or of the Releife of the . . . Inhabitantes of melmerby & Scrafton'. Some of the omissions seem to have been dictated by his status as a 'temporall', or lay, man of no great spiritual pretensions or learning; most of the others relate to his acquisition and retaining of money and other property. The latter class of omission includes a chapter expressly concerning the hermit's begging and receipt of alms when he is travelling around. Since the usual, and ecclesiastically sanctioned, life of a hermit in the sixteenth century was one of itinerant mendicancy, this is a noteworthy omission, and suggests that a steady flow of pilgrims to the chapel, his three acres of land, and whatever may have been sent down from the monastery along with Gysborn, provided a sufficient living for our hermit.

In the other set of omissions is a chapter on the procedure to be followed should a hermit wish to preach, and a sequence of chapters detailing how he is to recite the Hours of the Divine Office, and his other devotions. This part of the rule is subject to the widest

<sup>51</sup>. We may perhaps speculate that, if there was a St Simon's Bridge at this period, as there is now, he may have been responsible for its upkeep too. (See Clay, *Hermits and Anchorites*, pp. 57–65 for examples of bridge-warden hermits.)



variation among its various recensions, and the variation does not follow the pattern one might necessarily expect. That the original version of the rule is in Latin already implies a level of learning evidently far beyond the 'caretaker' of the chapel of St Simon and St Jude, with his almost mantric recitation of *Paters* and *Aves*, and the omission of these chapters is no surprise. In one of the other English versions of the rule, by contrast, the details of the masses to be said at different times of the day and in different times of the year, together with lists of psalms, prayers and hymns, all to be recited in Latin, exceed even the degree of knowledge required by the original Latin rule.<sup>52</sup>

Comparable variation appears to obtain among the briefer, more rudimentary rules often appended to the ceremonies for the benediction of hermits found in later medieval pontificals.<sup>53</sup> This diversity among the various hermits' rules might be seen as evidence of a state of legalised anarchy in the late medieval eremitic vocation. Equally, however, we may choose to emphasise the flexibility and sensitivity to local circumstances and needs of this *ad hoc* approach to the regulation of the hermit's life. The sense that individual hermits were receiving individual attention and tailor-made personal instruction from their spiritual advisors is an important corrective to the commonplaces of the satirical tradition which sees (with Langland) nothing but a 'religion sanz reule and resonable obedience'.<sup>54</sup> It is only thanks to the fortuitous combination of the survival of Gysborn's manuscript with the incidental evidence attested in the case of Buckle *vs* Topham that it has been possible in part to reconstruct the nature of the relationship between the Premonstratensian canons of Coverham Abbey and the hermit-chapel of St Simon and St Jude in Coverdale. Whether the situation here was typical or exceptional must remain a matter for conjecture, and for further research.

## APPENDIX

### 'The Rule of Celestine' in British Library, MS Sloane 1584, ff. 89r-95v

Pope off Rome that hyght Celestyn mad this maner off lyff that ys writtyne here ffor lyffing off hermettes yat lyffes alone withowttyne certan rewle gyvyne off Holy Kyrke, ffor that sckylle shewys he att his begynnyng & says:

Thoffe all ytt be so that the state off hermettes be withowtene rewle maid off Holy Kyrke, neuerthelesse ytt ys ned to euerylke mane yat has, ffor the love off owr Lorde Ihesu Chryst, chosyne a way off wyllfull pouerte ffor to lyffe holyly. Ffor Sent Paule says yat the wyll off God ys that we lyff holyly in lyffe: *Hec est voluntas Dei, sanctificacio vestra*.<sup>55</sup>

Ffyrst ytt behouys hyme that wyll lyff holy lyfe to fforsake this fals worlde & all the vanytis off this world — that ys his owne wyll and lustis off his owne flesch — ffor the loue off Gode [89v] Allmyghty & hele off his owne soule, and truste onely in the gudnes off owre Lord Ihesu Cryste, & be besy nyght and day ffor to do his wyll, doynge gud dedis, pursuande hyme in all that he may, kepyng fullye the x commawndmentis, ffylfyllinge them in all his power, and the dedis of mercy.

And thene he may suythffastly be Godys power mane, & do right well, thoffe all he entyr noyght into no couent. He must thynke euer one the gospell that says, "Iff thowe wyll be perfytt, go sell all that thowe has & gyffe ytt to power men and come persew me, & thowe shall haue tressure in hevyne withowt end."<sup>56</sup> Ffore yff all ytt be so that the lyffe that euer ys lastyng may be gottyne vnder the sacrament off holy matrimony thorowe the keppying off the commawndmentis, ffleyng fro syne, neuerthelesse more sekerly & more perfyttly commys thos mene to the blesse off hevyne

<sup>52</sup> See British Library, Add. MS. 34193, ff. 131r-36v, especially ff. 134v-36r.

<sup>53</sup> See Davis, 'Rule of St. Paul', pp. 210-11.

<sup>54</sup> *Piers Plowman*, B- Text, XIII: 284-85.

<sup>55</sup> 1 *Thessalonians* 4:3.

<sup>56</sup> *Matthew* 19:21; *Luke* 18:22.



that [90r] ffolowys Crist by ye narew way off wyllfull powrnes, & ffor hys love fforesakis the world with all his lykyns — noght only yat he has, but that he myght haue had yff he had lyvyd therin als other mene done. As wyttnes Sant Barnerd & the holy mane Sant Austen, ther he shewys the ryghtwysse way off lyffynge. “Gud,” he says, “itt ys to gyffe be seytt ways oft-tymys erthly gudis ffor Godis love vnto pouer mene, but more perfectione itt ys to gyffe all that he has and folowe Cryste in pouernes.”<sup>57</sup> Ffore he says that he ys ffare fro sothffaste pouernes yat other prively or openly gedyris rychis, butt yff ytt be so to do yerwith ony gud ded, ore ellis to saue hyme ffro harde bodely ned. Here ys shewyd opynly the begynnyng off holy lyffe, the qwylke, butt yffe ytt spryng off ye [90v] rott off meknes, ytt bryngis no frowt to the helpe off manis sowle.

And therfor ylke a hermeytt owght ffyrst to be buxum to God Allmyghty & to his commawndmentys, ffore he ys abbott & prior off his cloyster — that ys to say, off his hert & off his body; ffor whos loue he has nott fforsakyne onely that he had, butt yat [he] myght haue had yff he had dwellyd in the world. Hyme owght also to be buxum to the byschope in whos byschopbryke he ys wonnyng in, and to his patron in whos place that he wonnys in. And yff he be a prelate, parson ore preste & off gud and honest lyff & off dyscrecion, thene awght hyme for to schewe his lyff vnto hyme & wyrke after his cownsell in that att ys gud. For and he here hyme, he heris God hymeselfe, ffor so says owre Lord Ihesu Crist to his [91r] dycypyllys: “That mane that herys youe heris me, & that mane yat dyspycys youe dyspycis me”<sup>58</sup> Iff hys patron be no prest, then hyme awght to go to hyme that maid hyme heymett and schewe his lyff to hyme. Ilke a heymett owght euermore to say the sothe & dred non erthly mane ffore the sothfastnes, ffor hyme awe onely for to dred hyme that has power off his body and off his sowle & may ffore his trespas pyne them bothe in helle. Agayne Iewys and Saressyns, and fals cristyne mene that says owght ore doys agayne cristyne trovthe, thene owght hyme to dye stedfastlye to stond ffor to maynteyne with all his myght the trovthe off Holy Kyrke, and yff ned be therfor to be redy to dye.<sup>59</sup>

Hermettis awe to make a vowe off wyllfull pouerte & off chastyte to God [91v] thorowe helpe off hymeselfe, noght thorowe the bydyng off another off his order, butt to bynd hyme sadly to God Allmyghty. He may make ytt beffore byschope, abbott or priore, and do aftyr ther covnsyll & yer commawndment.<sup>60</sup>

Hyme awght nott to be besy aftyr sere mettis and drynkis. And yff he haue more then he nedys hymselfe, then go gyffe yt gladlye to theme that has more myster — for that ensampyll off wyllfull pouerte opynly shewynge off charite & off grett meknes.

It chargys noght what hewe that his clothis be butt that thei be nother to fayre nor to fovle. Ffor the holy mane Sent Bernard says that he has lovyd wyllfull pouerte for Goddis sake, butt neuer fylth.<sup>61</sup> Neuertheles ylke a hermett awght to beware that he wher no habbytt that ys lyke to ony oder order off relegyon, so that they that he wonnys noght among noþer ney by hyme theroff nor slandar thame. He may were the heyre yff he wyll next his fleych, yff ytt lett nott grettly his deucon [92r] in praynge ffor bytyng off wormis that breidis tharvndyr. Here in his hart weres he euermore whene he thingkis off the passion off owr Lord Jhesu Cryst.

He schall were shone yff he may nott go bareffott, syklyke as he may gett ffore the loue off God Allmyghty — nother to prowde nore pykyd as provd mene done were, butt of all thyng he has ned to kepe hyme with mesure. Hyme owght nott to go alone yff he may gett another hermett with

<sup>57.</sup> This quotation has not been identified among the works of Augustine or Bernard, or elsewhere.

<sup>58.</sup> *Luke* 10:16.

<sup>59.</sup> This sentence is somewhat garbled. The Latin ‘Rule’ has here *et specialiter contra omnes iudeos, saracenos et falsos christianos catholicam fidem sancte romane ecclesie non credentes, pro huiusmodi erroribus destruendis mortem pro fide Christi subire, si oporteat, non formidet* (ed. Olier, p. 313). An emended version might read: ‘Agayne Iewys and Saressyns . . . owght hyme stedfastlye to stond ffor to maynteyne with all his myght the trovthe off Holy Kyrke, and yff ned be therfor to be redy to dye’, with ‘thene’ and the first ‘to dye’ having been omitted.

<sup>60.</sup> Two chapters of the Latin text are omitted at this point (*viz.* chapters v–vi), concerning the hermit’s possession of worldly goods, including money, and against the storing up of provisions in his cell.

<sup>61.</sup> *Paupertatem dilexi, sordes nunquam*. This is one of the sayings attributed to St Bernard and recorded in the *Vita Prima* written by his followers at Clairvaux (book 3 chapter 2; *Patrologica Latina* 18, ed. J.-P. Migne, (Paris, 1854–1855), col. 306): *In vestibus ei paupertas semper placuit, sordes nunquam*. The identification was made by Olier (p. 314).



hyme, or ellis any other chyld or seruand. Nor ytt is nott full comly to compas the contre yff his chyld ore seruand may do his herandis, & for dred of fallyng in temptacion off flescly lustis thorow vanites off the world and lykyng off syyte, ffor recheles deuocion & lykyng that we schuld gastely gett thorow lyght off owre soule.<sup>62</sup>

When [92v] he ys wonand att home in his celle, fro Complyne be done to *Preciosa* be sond he schall say nore speyke with no mane no worde,<sup>63</sup> nore whene he ys fro home alffarforthe as he may. And yff grett ned be that he schall owght speke, thene schall he speke schortly with dred off God Allmyghty, begynnyng with *Benedicite* & blysse hym beffore.

Ilke a tyme of the yere awe hym to ffast iii das off the weyke in his celle yff he be att home: the Wedynsday, Ffryday & the Settarday, butt yff he be seke. The Fryday shall he ffast only to bred & water, butt yff ytt be dubbyll ffeste,<sup>64</sup> ffor wakyng or ffor travylllyng. Than shall he breke ii days & fast on the Fryday to bred and ale & potage, & whittmett yff he wyll. Fforty days [93r] beffore Pasche, the Aduent before Yole, ix days beffor Wytsonday and ix days beffor Miyhelmes awe ylke ane armett to ffast vnto fyschmet. & ylke a day whene he fastis (yf he be att home) he schall fferebere whittmett yff he may gett ffysche; and yff do trauyll, to whatt he may gett.

In iii grett ffestis in the yere that commis ylke a yere — Yole, Pase and Wytsonday — may ylke a hermett ett fflesche in his celle; & iii days aftyr ylke fest butt yff they be ffysche days. Other tymes off ye yere, yff he be ffro home, he may ette flesch Sunday, Monday, Tuysdaye and the Thursday, and he be occupyd with besynes or trauell of his body. The Wedynsday shall he fferebere flesche butt be this skyll: yff that ytt be a dubyll ffest or ellis he trauell sor. Than [93v] may he ette fflesche, butt neuer in his celle butt iii princypall days as yt be beffore said.<sup>65</sup>

And whatsoever he do ore may gett, ane hermett awe ylke a day when ytt is tyme for to wyrke — a tyme befor mett att none, and another aftyr none whene he may best — for to do sune dedys with his handis. For ydylnes ys enmy off crystyne mene saule, and we ar born vnto trauell as byrd ffor to flye.<sup>66</sup> & therefore he that wy[r]kis nott ys not worthy ette.<sup>67</sup> The prophit Dauyd says in ye Sawter-boke that what mane so etys ye warke off handis, he ys blessyd & holy, & well shall he be fro the deuyll that thorowe dred drawes mene to ydylnes and so gydys them the way to fallyng to syn.<sup>68</sup>

Ane hermeytt awght to lyge on nyghtis in his kyrtyll gyrdyd with a gyrdyll ore ellis with cord. And alfferforth as he persauce ytt ore knowe he awght to rys [94r] att mydnyght & he be att home ffor to say his matyns yff he be a clerke, ore yffe he be nott letyrd thane shall he say therfore [. . .]. And yff he be seke ore ellys trauell sore thane may he lyge in his bed and ryse whene hym thynkys best ffor to comfforth hymeselfe agan that he may wyrke gud warkis plesyng to God Allmyghty. Ffro Pase vnto Holy Rode Day in harvest shall he go to bed whene the sone settis and ryse when the sone rysys for to say his pryme. Ffro Holy Rod Day in vnto Septuagesima — that ys iii wekis beffor clene lentyn — he shall rys with the dawynge off the day; and ffro thens to Pase he shall ryse with lyght day.<sup>69</sup>

Ane hermeyt yat ys a prest shall one warkdays syng his masse sone after that he has said Prime; and yff he be no prest ore ellys syng nott [94v] thene shall he here a mase alfferfurth os he may.

<sup>62</sup>. Two more chapters of the Latin 'Rule' are omitted here (*viz.* chapters x–xi), dealing with the question of the hermit's permission to preach, and his begging and receipt of alms when travelling around (*per viam*).

<sup>63</sup>. Compline is the last of the daily monastic hours, while *Pretiosa* was a sequence of prayers and psalms attached to Prime.

<sup>64</sup>. A double feast is one on which there is a double obligation, both to refrain from work and to hear mass (e.g. Christmas Day).

<sup>65</sup>. Chapter xv of the Latin text is omitted, concerning his ownership and disposal of property.

<sup>66</sup>. Cf. *Psalm* 127:2.

<sup>67</sup>. Cf. 2 *Thessalonians* 3:10.

<sup>68</sup>. Cf. *Psalm* 127:2, 'Laborem manuum tuarum cum comederis beatus tu et bene tibi erit' (Vulgate) (*Psalm* 128:2 in A.V.).

<sup>69</sup>. Chapters xviii–xxi of the Latin 'Rule' omitted. These concern the hermit's recitation of the Hours of the Divine Office, and other devotions associated with the Hours.

And right sone aftyr masse vnto mydday he shall wyrke with his awne handis, and aftyr the houre of mydday be sayd he shall say *Commendacio* ffor all crystyne savlys.<sup>70</sup>

Ilke an hermet awe to kepe sylens att mett tym butt yff grett ned make ytt, or any grett lord. & whene he rysys ffro his mett or fro his sopyr he schall go to oretory with *Miserere mei Deus* & thanke God off that ffod that he has hyme send. After mett one fflesche days shall he say att none *Placebo* and *Dirige*<sup>71</sup> before he slepe, and after his slepe ryse, sume warkis to wyrke vnto Euynsong tym. Alfforforth as he may he shall say on fastyng days none beffore mett. He awght euermore this rewle ffor to kepe, whene he anythyng after the ouris of the nyght or off the days [95r] shall speyke with any man for anythyng: loke that euery tyme his spekyng begyn with *Benedicite* & lowyng off the god [name] of owr Lord Ihesu Cryst.

Ilke ane hermett als well leryd as lewd awght iiii tymes of the yere for to clense hyme off his synne — that is affor Yole, Pasce, Wytsonday & Myyhelmes. And yff he fast thes iiii tymis vnto fysche mett — that is to say to lentyne mett, ilke a tyme that he fastis and forberis whitmett, hym awe to resave the sacrament off owr Lord Ihesu Cryst.

A lewyd heyrmett for his Matyns ys holdyne to say xl Pater Noster and als many Aues; ffor Laudis, xvi Pater Noster als many Aues; for Prime, xii Pater Noster and als many Aues; ffor Vndren, Myday, None and Complyne: for ylkone off this ix Pater Noster and als many Aues; for Evyn[95v]song, xii Pater Noster and als many Aues. Also his *Cred[o] in Deum patrem* thrys [on]e the day and thrys on the nyght. Ffor his ffreyndys and his gud-doverys shall he say ylke day thyrty Pater Noster and thyrty Aues. Ane heyrmett that dwellys att home in his celle this maner hyme awght to say. And in case that he be seyke or ffeyll off state, or ellis labur in the contray any gret trauly, thene may he say his seruys on this wysse: att morne whene he rysys vpe of his rest to say xv Pater Noster & als many Aues — that ys for to say, v ffor qwyke & v ffor the ded and v ffor thos that Godys mercy abydis, besekynge God off his infenit mercy & helpe, & blyse hyme in his name & thene do his iornay yat he has don to do; and also att evyne when the day ys past, say other xv Pater Noster as he dyd befor att morne. And so end his lyff with dred off God Allmyghty. Amen.

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<sup>70</sup>. *Commendacio* is a prayer associated with the Office of the Dead. The rest of Gysborn's text has no parallel in the published Latin 'Rule', though the other English versions have the same or similar material.

<sup>71</sup>. That is, the Office of the Dead.





## WHITBY IN NORTH AFRICA

By Lawrence Butler

*The names York Castle and Fort Whitby occur in Tangier during the English occupation (1661–1684). It is suggested that they are directly attributable to Sir Hugh Cholmley of Whitby who designed and built the harbour mole at Tangier.*

During a search for suitable views to illustrate a recent English Heritage guide to Clifford's Tower in York the author noted an engraving by Wenceslaus Hollar showing 'The West Side of York Castle'. This was a puzzling reference since the date was 1669, much later than the same artist's view of Hull and its Citadel. On inspecting the illustration it was immediately clear that this was one of a series of drawings made at the port of Tangier when it was held and fortified by the English crown between 1661 and 1684.<sup>1</sup> However why was the name York Castle given to a new fortification overlooking the harbour and what lay behind the name Whitby for an area of cliffs north of that castle? To answer these questions it is necessary to review the history of the English occupation and the character of its fortifications.

The bay of Tangier had been seized from its Muslim Moorish inhabitants by the Portuguese in 1471. The strategic importance of such a naval base and trading post on the north African coast just within the Straits of Gibraltar was obvious. It gave the Portuguese easier access to the Mediterranean and provided a base against pirates operating along the Barbary coast and the Atlantic coast of north-west Africa. It also challenged Spain's control of the entrance to the Mediterranean and watched that country's enclaves at Ceuta and Melilla. Portugal built a walled town by the bay and a castle or citadel on the hill above the town. This town replaced the Moorish 'Old Tangier' a mile to the south around the bay. When the Spanish and Portuguese crowns were united (1580–1640) Tangier was occupied by Spanish troops and merchants, and the Spaniards only reluctantly released it to Portugal in 1648. With a constant threat of direct attack from the ruler of Fez and intrigue from Spain, the Portuguese were anxious to defend their possession and extend its territory. However they achieved their aim only by proxy.

In May 1661 as part of the marriage treaty between England and Portugal Charles II married Catherine of Braganza and the English received Tangier as an active defended

<sup>1</sup> Hollar's visit to Tangier, 1669, is best known through a set of twelve engravings of his water-colours, published by John Overton in 1674 (nos P. 1187–1198 in Pennington's catalogue; he also drew three panoramas at sea: nos. P. 1199–1201 and a map of Tangier: no. P. 1202). York Castle is no. 1191 and 1196: R. Pennington, *A descriptive catalogue of the etched work of Wenceslaus Hollar (1607–1677)*, (London 1982), pp. xlv–xlvii, 205–08. The settlement at Whitby is illustrated in R. T. Godfrey, *Wenceslaus Hollar: a Bohemian artist in London* (London, 1994), colour plate 11 and no. 125. Most of the drawings are catalogued by E. Croft-Murray and P. Hulton, *Catalogue of British Drawings: I, the XVI and XVII Centuries* (London 1960), pp. 359–60, nos 28–41 and plates 158–61. The view of Whitby from the south-east is no. 32 and plate 160a; the plan of Whitby is no. 41. Other drawings in private collections are described and illustrated in F. C. Springell, 'Unpublished drawings of Tangier by W. Hollar', *Burlington Magazine*, 106 (1964), 69–74. The birds-eye view plan and south prospect of Hull (c. 1640) has been reproduced most recently in A. Howes and M. Foreman, *Town and Gun: the 17th-century defences of Hull* (Hull 1999), pp. 8, 22. It is Pennington no. P.984; the South Prospect is shown fully in Graham Parry, *Hollar's England — a mid-seventeenth century view* (Salisbury 1980), plate 10.





Fig. 1. The Barracks at Whitby.

Water-colour by Wenceslaus Hollar 1669. Copyright: The British Museum.

Whitby harbour to the right and the quarries to the left. The earthwork Fort Whitby is upper left and the stockade post Devil's Drop is on the shore beyond the quarries.

Hollar's Title reads:

Prospect of Whitby by Tangier where the  
Stone for the Mould is fets'd and the Workmen  
doe quarter. drawne from the S. E. by W. H.



colony. However the next two decades were full of difficulties for the English garrison.<sup>2</sup> The English parliament never provided enough financial support to maintain and enlarge the defences, or to deepen its harbour. The Portuguese traders left the town, forcing the English to start mercantile life afresh. The Moors were a constant threat to the land defences, and piracy was a regular danger to all Christians who if captured would be sold into slavery. The Spanish were anxious to extend their African coastal territories immediately opposite their own kingdom and made life difficult for the English navy and trading craft. The raid on Cadiz harbour and the defeat of the Spanish Armada were still fresh in their memory.

The English had to safeguard the anchorage and to protect the city from land attacks. On the advice of Admiral Sir John Lawson and the surveyor Hugh Cholmley (Sir Hugh after 1665), the harbour was protected by a long mole. This was started in 1663 and was supervised by Sir Hugh until 1676.<sup>3</sup> He brought the stone from freshly opened quarries on the cliffs to the west which were soon called Whitby by the English miners.<sup>4</sup> The mole was continued by Henry Shere 1676–80 but was then abandoned without being completed to its intended length, nor were its inner harbour arms fully constructed according to Cholmley's original plans.

The land defences were strengthened by the engineer-general Major Beckman as far as finances permitted. The intended garrison of four thousand men was seldom attained; often sailors were dressed in uniform and paraded to impress visiting ambassadors with a show of military strength. The much-needed cavalry were always insufficient in numbers and in the quality of their mounts. The Portuguese city walls were improved by heightening one corner tower, doubling the arches at the gates and adding a further line of ditches on the exposed south and west. The citadel was improved by a bastioned outer defence and an additional high prospect tower, known as Peterborough Tower, to look out over the sand-hills. The north flank was protected by a bastioned trace and, four hundred yards to the east, the headland overlooking the harbour received a new bastioned quadrangular stronghold, known as York Castle.

On the landward side the garrison needed to hold an outer circuit on the surrounding hills and sand dunes to prevent surprise attacks and to protect water supplies from local springs. They also had to protect the fields to the south and west of the town to enable the inhabitants to raise some food supplies and to obtain fodder for the cavalry horses without fear of ambush. This protection was achieved largely by building eleven stone forts (later increased to fifteen) and by digging two miles of earthwork defence lines to designs of Martin Beckman and, in 1664–65, of Bertrand de Gomme. Apart from Fort Whitby the major forts were called after members of the royal family by Christian name (Charles, Catherine, Henrietta, James, Anne) or by ducal title (York, Kendal, Cambridge,

<sup>2</sup> The three main sources are Hugh Cholmley, *An Account of Tangier* (published privately, 1787), E. M. G. Routh, *Tangier: England's lost Atlantic outpost 1661–1684* (London, 1912) and John Davis, *The History of the Second Queen's Royal Regiment, now the Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment*, vol. 1 (London, 1887). Davis was concerned with the military history of the Tangier Regiment; Routh placed the colony in a wider political context, while Cholmley gave an assessment of the value of the colony to the crown in 1676 and also provided a diary of his period there, 1670–1674.

<sup>3</sup> Sir Hugh Cholmley (1627–1688) was the principal contractor for the building of the harbour mole at Tangier. He was anxious to justify the suitability of his design and methods for this particular location and was equally concerned that he was paid the sums which he had expended annually in fulfilling this contract. In 1680 he had hopes that he might be appointed Governor and could thereby complete the harbour mole to his original plan.

<sup>4</sup> 'The whole bears the name of Whitby, so called by several workmen that came at first to this place from Whitby in Yorkshire': Cholmley, *An Account of Tangier*, p. 71. At the quarries was built accommodation to house 150 workmen and stabling for 90 horses; there were also store-sheds, a gunpowder magazine, a forge and a hospital. Cholmley called it 'a city' for his workers, *ibid.*, p. 70.



Monmouth). The minor forts and redoubts were usually named from the governors who had ordered their construction or the military commanders who actually supervised the work (Norwood, Palmes, Bellasis, Bridges and, perhaps, Giles).<sup>5</sup> A few small forts and outposts were named from their location (Fountain, Pond, Pole), whilst a stockade post near the shore to defend the quarries at Whitby was known as Devil's Drop. The open space west of the town with a bowling green within a fortified trace was called Whitehall, presumably after the palace and street of that name at Westminster. The various earth-work defence lines, the palisades and the sunken ways which linked the outer forts to the town were not individually named. In the town itself the strengthened east gate or watergate was called Sandwich Tower after the admiral Edward Montagu, earl of Sandwich. The west gate, known to the Portuguese as Puerta Catalina, was now strengthened and defended with a new angled fore-bastion; this was called Port Catherine after the queen whose marriage dowry the town had been.

The name given to the cliffs north of the town and the fort above these quarries was exceptional in not being called after a member of the royal family or a British military commander. The link between the quarries and the harbour works under Cholmley strongly suggests that this area was named to recall his home at Whitby Abbey on the north-east facing cliffs. York Castle may also have been named by Cholmley, though one might have expected him to prefer Scarborough for a fortified headland high above the harbour. It may be that Scarborough sounded much too similar to the nearby Peterborough Tower, named after the first governor of Tangier. It could be that Scarborough despite its strong royalist associations from the siege of 1648–49 might also have recalled his father's actions as a turncoat in 1645. Alternatively it might have been tactful to recognise the superior role of James, duke of York, as Commander in Chief of the Army and as chairman of the Committee for the Affairs of Tangier, even though Fort James and Fort York were also to be named in his honour.

The lack of finance and proper investment eventually told against the retention of this trading outpost. Attacks by the ruler of Fez, Khadir Gailan, in 1664 and by the emperor of the Moors, Mulai Ismail, in 1680, had been repulsed only with great difficulty and loss of life. In 1683 the decision was taken to abandon the colony, dismantle the harbour mole and to remove all those fortifications built by the English which could be of use to a new occupier. Drawings were made by Thomas Phillips for the Master of the Ordnance, the earl of Dartmouth, showing Tangier with its defences intact in September 1683 and then a pair of comparable views with its defences destroyed (under the supervision of Martin Beckman) in February 1684.<sup>6</sup> The loss of this naval station made the capture of Gibraltar in 1704 even more welcome.

For the modern visitor the old walled town is still recognisable as the Medina, the fortified citadel on the hilltop is now the Casbah. The defence walls of York Castle still surround the headland above the much enlarged harbour with Cholmley's mole rebuilt soon after 1923. The cliffs of Whitby, rising to a height of 90 metres above sea level, are

<sup>5</sup> Fort Bellasis was named after John, Lord Belasyse of Worlaby, second son of Thomas, the first Viscount Fauconberg, of Newburgh Abbey; John's mother was Barbara, daughter of Sir Henry Cholmley of Whitby. Sir Henry was Sir Hugh's great-grandfather. Lord Belasyse was General of the Royal Forces in Africa and Governor of Tangier 1664–1666. Two other Yorkshiremen involved at Tangier were John (Sheffield), Lord Mulgrave and Lieut.-Col. Marmaduke Boynton. Lord Mulgrave, who had links with Hull and the East Riding as well as with Mulgrave castle near Whitby and Normanby Hall in north Lincolnshire, went as the military commander in July 1680 but soon returned to England. Marmaduke Boynton served in Tangier from 1664–1684 and was a member of the family at Barmston and Burton Agnes.

<sup>6</sup> Phillips' paintings are now at Magdalene College, Cambridge: Routh, *Tangier*, plates facing pp. 264, 266, 360, 362. One of his drawings is at the British Museum: Croft-Murray and Hulton, *Catalogue*, pp. 450–51, no. 1 and plate 162b.

now named Sidi Buknadel and the plateau of the Marshan, where Fort Whitby stood, has elegant French colonial villas and the English hospital built a century or more ago. No British name now survives.

The involvement of Sir Hugh Cholmley as the surveyor-general responsible for the harbour works and as a member of the Committee for the Affairs of Tangier is the obvious explanation for the quarry area being named Whitby, situated under the protection of Fort Whitby. He had built a harbour mole at Whitby in Yorkshire and he shipped out Yorkshire miners to work at Tangier from 1663. He also constructed the road along the shore to allow carts to bring the stone to the harbour rather than having to rely on ships or captured feluccas. Sir Hugh may also have been involved in naming the harbour defence as York Castle. Both names were nostalgic transplants of Yorkshire on a hostile shore.





## THE GOSSIP FAMILY OF THORP ARCH. SETTLEMENT IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY: A CRISIS

By Brett Harrison

*This article is a case study of the achievement of William Gossip (1704–1772) of York in establishing himself as a member of the landed gentry by purchasing the lordship of Thorp Arch in 1748. It follows his relationship with his five sons, their careers in the hosiery business in Leicester and the army. George's failure in business caused William not to leave his estates solely to his eldest son as envisaged under his marriage settlement. Instead he established a strict settlement under his will to divide them amongst the survivors. This decision enabled future generations to make suitable marriages which further enhanced the family fortunes.*

The Gossip family entered the ranks of the landed gentry in the middle of the eighteenth century on the purchase in 1748 of the lordship of Thorp Arch. This article uses the extensive and detailed records left by William Gossip to examine his achievement in establishing and preserving a family estate.<sup>1</sup> It also examines his character and that of his heirs and the conflict that developed over the descent of the estate. William's parents had married in 1697 at which time William, senior, was a mercer in middle age and Susannah — the widow of Cornelius Rushworth, a gentleman, with a son, John, by her first marriage — was in her forty-second year when she gave birth to William in 1704. He was their only son and heir.

The Gossip family had its roots in the market town of Beverley in the East Riding of Yorkshire but there is no extant detailed family tree. William Gossip, senior, already had substantial landholdings with estates in Friop near Whitby, Beverley, Rawcliffe near Goole, Hatfield, and Wroot in north Lincolnshire, where Susannah held the lordship of the manor. William, the father, had described himself as a mercer in a draft will of 1697 but by 1725 he was describing himself as a gentleman. His land dealing was typical of 'the more substantial tradesmen of the market towns' with ambitions to establish 'their posterity with some standing as landed gentlemen'.<sup>2</sup>

The parents doted on their child. William was given the benefits of an education under one of the leading teachers of the period, Thomas Clark, at Wakefield Grammar School, 'one of the best in the north'.<sup>3</sup> William moved with him to Kirkleatham Grammar School on its opening in 1720. At the age of seventeen he went up to Trinity College, Cambridge, as a scholar. He spent some seven years at University, obtaining a BA degree in 1726 and his MA in 1729. He was encouraged to stay on by the promise of the post of college librarian but during his period of tenure a dispute was raging around the position and

<sup>1</sup> West Yorkshire Archive Service [WYAS], Leeds, WYL1015, Thorp Arch estate records [TA].

<sup>2</sup> TA 15/11/1, draft will of William Gossip, mercer, 1694; TA15/11/5, copy, probate of will of William Gossip of York, gentleman, made 11 December 1725, proved 16 March 1732. B. A. Holderness, 'The English Land Market in the Eighteenth Century', *Economic History Review*, second series, 27 (1974), p. 565.

<sup>3</sup> M. H. Peacock, *History of The Free Grammar School of Queen Elizabeth at Wakefield* (Wakefield, 1892), pp. 132–35. Geoffrey Holmes, *Augustan England* (London, 1982), p. 56.



Gossip was never rewarded for his work.<sup>4</sup> On coming down he had to decide on a future career and appears to have toyed with a number of options. For a gentleman, the customary route to a reputable position in society was ordination into the Church of England. A good living could furnish a satisfactory level of income.<sup>5</sup> One of Gossip's closest friends, the Reverend Edmund Dring, had been ordained in 1728, to take up a fellowship at Trinity College. An alternative to a career in the Church was to go into partnership with another university friend and distant relation, William Stainforth of York. Stainforth was keen to have a partner with business acumen and sufficient capital in a wine business that he was planning to purchase. Gossip, however, heeded his mother's advice that he would be 'open to bear the full burden of the business if it failed' and turned the offer down.<sup>6</sup> His decision was to live the life of a gentleman, his father being a man of 'considerable fortune'.<sup>7</sup> Gossip set about the management of his father's affairs. By then his father was about 75 years old. He received rents and advanced money on mortgages, a practice that was commonplace at this time amongst the wealthier members of society.<sup>8</sup> It could be a lucrative business. He was well placed in York society at a time when the city was becoming a centre of fashion. He participated in the social round, developing his connections by becoming a subscriber and one of the twelve directors and treasurer of the Assembly Rooms from 1730. Sir William Wentworth, for example, a leading promoter of the new building, held him in high regard.<sup>9</sup>

One of the attractions of the Assembly was the opportunity to meet young ladies of rank and it is likely that this was the place where Gossip consorted with his wife-to-be. A suitable marriage could bring additional resources and has been seen as the most important single factor in the rise of most families.<sup>10</sup> From comments made by some of his friends in their letters of congratulation on his marriage, however, it is evident that the relationship was one of long standing.<sup>11</sup> Gossip was married on 13 November 1731 at the Minster to Anna Wilmer, one of the daughters of George Wilmer of London and York. While it was quite clearly a love match, it was also a union of social equals. Anna's fortune was well established. Her father was Lord of the Manor of Bloys & Grassalls in Essex of which she was co-heiress with her sister, Lucy.<sup>12</sup> She brought with her something like £2,000 stock in the South Sea Annuities, as far as can be ascertained in the absence of a surviving marriage settlement. Gossip had, perhaps, forgotten this when he claimed after George Wilmer's death that he 'had nothing from . . . Grandfather Wilmer but what I p[ai]d very dearly for except a good wife & some old Books.'<sup>13</sup> They lived initially with the aged Gossip parents in Petergate. Until his father's death on 20 February 1733, William Gossip looked after his father's business and property affairs and, thereafter,

<sup>4</sup> R. Sinker, *Biographical Notes on The Librarians of Trinity College on Sir Edward Stanhope's Foundation* (Cambridge, 1897), pp. 53–55.

<sup>5</sup> TA 22/1, letter, 17 September 1729, Su[sannah] Gossip at York to Mr Wm Gossip [hereafter WG], Trinity College, Cambridge. His mother mentions a 'very Concidorable Benefes' that he might be interested in at 'Beeford'.

<sup>6</sup> TA 22/1, letter, 17 May [1729], Su[sannah] Gossip at York to WG 'to be left at Mr Blackhalls at the Black Lyon in high Thames Street neigh Joyners Hall London to be kept till called for'.

<sup>7</sup> TA 15/11/5, copy, probate of will of William Gossip.

<sup>8</sup> B. A. Holderness, 'Credit in English Rural Society before the Nineteenth Century, with special reference to the period 1650–1720', *Agricultural History Review*, 24 (1976), p. 103.

<sup>9</sup> TA 22/1, letter, 3 [Nov] 1729, Su Gossip, York to WG at Trinity College, Cambridge.

<sup>10</sup> G. E. Mingay, *The Gentry* (London, 1976), p. 115.

<sup>11</sup> TA 22/1, letter, 18 November 1731, from Edmund Dring, Trinity College, Cambridge to WG Junr., Petergate, York.

<sup>12</sup> C. W. Foster and J. J. Green *History of the Wilmer family* (Leeds, 1883), pp. 127–32. Under a surviving marriage settlement for her grandfather, Randall, the manors, containing some 336 acres, were settled upon her grandmother; Essex Record Office, D/DU 32/1.

<sup>13</sup> TA 21/7, letter book 1764–1765, copy letter, 10 December 1764, WG to Coz Iveson.



ever more confidently on his own account. In his letter book Gossip entered the following memorandum on his father's death:

My Dear Father William Gossip, died on Tuesday the 20th of February 1732/3 between ten and eleven of the clock at night. He was buried at St Martins in Coney Street, York in the chancel near the upper end of the south side of the middle isle on Saturday the 24th of February following. An epidemical cold (Fatal to children and People in Years) which the weakness of Nature had not strength enough to struggle with carryed him off in a weeks time . . . He was aged about 78.<sup>14</sup>

Gossip bought a house in Ogleforth, backing on to St William's College, in 1734 and from that time onwards his mother Susannah lived with the young Gossip family.<sup>15</sup> At the same time he was appointed a Justice of the Peace. It was a matter of some satisfaction to old William to have lived long enough to see his son with an heir, carrying forward the family name successfully. William Gossip the third had been born on 11 December 1732.

Between 1732 and 1745 Anna Gossip gave birth to eleven children. It is evident that William was determined that his line was going to survive. Yet the well-documented hazards of rearing children to adulthood are shown by the fate of the many of the babies in infancy.<sup>16</sup> Four children died within a year of birth, one of them still-born.<sup>17</sup>

Even those children that survived childhood diseases and small pox were cut down in young adulthood. Only three of Gossip's children survived him. These were all boys and lived to have families of their own. Demographically this was a successful family which, for a gentleman, would ensure the continuity of the family name and estates.<sup>18</sup> Since none of his daughters survived to marriageable age he was able to avoid the depletion of his estates in marriage settlements to provide portions.<sup>19</sup> A salutary comparison can be made with the family of William Garforth, whose fortune passed to his nephew, Edmund Dring [Gossip's friend], because all his seven children predeceased him. Only two lived into their twenties and none had children themselves. Such family tragedies have been well documented in relation to Yorkshire baronets, but little research has been carried out on the experiences of the more numerous landed gentry.<sup>20</sup> Despite such high mortality in these two families, it is estimated that the population of the City of York rose between 1700 and 1750 from around 12,000 to 16,000.<sup>21</sup> The population of England also rose at this time from 5 millions to 5.7 millions.<sup>22</sup>

Family members who survived required a certain toughness, like Gossip's mother Susannah. On her death on 8 February 1742, aged 79, he wrote:

My poor dear Mother . . . died. About 5 minutes past 4 in the afternoon — 28 August — 1727 . . . coming down a pair of stairs in the house we then inhabited in Castlegate she fell ag[ains]t a window which lay lower than the head of the stairs and from thence, the casements flying open, down into the street 14 foot at least. She happily broke no Bones nor the skin in any Place but her forehead about the size of a shilling. She recovered of her bruises tho slowly yet successfully, notwithstanding she was then 63 years of age. But it was imagined that the shock she then received,

<sup>14</sup>. TA 3/2, letter book.

<sup>15</sup>. B. L. Harrison, 'William Gossip's House in Ogleforth, York 1733–1808', *York Historian*, 15 (1999).

<sup>16</sup>. E. A. Wrigley, R. S. Davies, J. E. Oeppen & R. S. Schofield, *English Population History from Family Reconstitution, 1580–1837* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 214–42.

<sup>17</sup>. TA 3/2, letter book 1731–747, memorandum, June 12, 1739 [printed in full in A. Vickery, *The Gentleman's Daughter* (London, 1998), pp. 103–04.

<sup>18</sup>. Mingay, *Gentry*, p. 116.

<sup>19</sup>. Lloyd Bonfield, 'Marriage Settlements and the "Rise of Great Estates": The Demographic Aspect', *Economic History Review*, second series, 32 (1979), p. 486.

<sup>20</sup>. P. Roebuck, *Yorkshire Baronets 1640–1760* (Oxford, 1980), p. 253.

<sup>21</sup>. C. W. Chalklin, *The Provincial Towns of Georgian England, A study of building processes 1740–1820* (1974), p. 18.

<sup>22</sup>. Roy Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century* (1990), pp. 202–06.



occasioned a hard schirrous swelling in her right breast, which however she did not discover till Novr 1734. This proved cancerous and continued increasing as long as she lived'.<sup>23</sup>

With a growing family, comprising three boys at this stage, Gossip was soon drawn to establishing himself in the country, whilst retaining his York town house. He leased a farm at Skelton near York in 1739 from the Reverend Clarke, headmaster of Wakefield Grammar School, and began to gain some experience of the life of a landed gentleman. After his mother's death he left the first house in Skelton and rented the 'Hall House at Skelton which is sadly out of repair' and decided to make that his primary residence. He then advertised his York house for sale or let in the *York Courant* on 16 March 1742. He embarked on the farming round. He also spent some time gaining valuable experience for building a house of his own in improving the Skelton property. William Gossip's eldest son and heir, also William, was sent off to school at Ripon with the Revd Hide. In his person were reposed all the father's ambitions for his family and with hindsight it is interesting to read Gossip's advice to him in April 1743:

I am not sorry to find that my Dear begins to reckon how long it is to his coming home, for I hope it proceeds not from any dislike to school, but affection to Papa, Mamma & Brothers, who are all glad to see you whenever it is consistent with the interest of your education. My Dear needs never be ashamed of shewing affection to your relations, kindness to your acquaintance and civility to all you converse with. These are commendable qualities & such as I wish my Dear would take particular care to improve in himself as much as possible. It is time now, my Dear, to shake of that little shyness and bashfulness of behaviour, the effects of which, those that do not know you so well are apt to impute to a little sourness of temper. I flatter myself that is not really the case with you, but the very appearance of it will be a great disadvantage to you in life; as on the contrary nothing is more engaging in the conduct of young people of your Standing than cheerfulness & affability & a willingness to oblige as well your equals & inferiors, as superiors. You may see the good effects of this in your brother George, who has no other advantage over you than in this qualification I am recommending. His little prattle & openness of temper gains him many friends, & you see even occasions his being sent for abroad, for the sake of his company forsooth.<sup>24</sup>

In years to come if William Gossip reread his letters he might have winced over parts of this advice. While reflecting in many ways the Augustan spirit of the age, his comments *a propos* his son George hint at elements of the latter's character that were to cause conflict with his father in the future. William, the eldest son, was to die at the age of twenty-one while at Edinburgh University reading medicine. George then became eldest son and heir to the estate. He, however, did not go to University but was to cause his father years of anguish in business to the extent that, ultimately, he was to lose his inheritance.

Gossip lavished his love and care on William during his childhood. In 1747, he withdrew him from school 'in order to renew my almost lost acquaintance with the Classics, at the same time as I instruct him. I am so well pleased with his proficiency in the Latin tongue that I hope it will be rather an amusement than a trouble to me'.<sup>25</sup> Two years later, by which time his son was studying at Edinburgh, he gave his son the following characteristic advice:

York Jany 11 1749 — I am glad, my Dear, you have kept an exact account of your expences: The perusal of it may perhaps remove any impression I labour under at present of your having been too lavish in 'em. I wonder you did not transcribe it upon the vacant half sheet in yr Letr, you might be assured I shd desire to see it, especially as you make a call upon me so much sooner than I expected but I will say no more upon this subject 'till I have seen it & therefore desire you

<sup>23</sup>. TA 3/2, letter book.

<sup>24</sup>. TA 3/2, letter book, copy letter, April 1743, WG to William Gossip.

<sup>25</sup>. TA 3/2, letter book. Copy letter, 16 January 1747, WG at Skelton to Revd Mr Hide, Ripon.



will send it by return of the Post & then you shall have a speedy Remittance. I shall be uneasy 'till I hear from you, for (setting aside the consideration of the inconvenience to my circumstances with a large family & an expensive undertaking in hand) I lay down for a certain maxim that extraordinary Expences can be of no service but rather an impediment to any young persons studies.<sup>26</sup>

By 1749, as he mentioned, Gossip had 'an expensive undertaking in hand', the full story of which has been told elsewhere.<sup>27</sup> He had purchased 1,104 acres of land at Thorp Arch from the sisters of Lady Betty Hastings. The land comprised an outlying portion of their estates yet was ideally located for Gossip. Included was the lordship of the Manor, farm and cottage properties and water mills with a rental income of £370 and woodland worth £559 12s. 5d. upon it, for which he gave £4,725. Additionally he had to accept a mortgage of £4,000 to provide an income for a relation of the Hastings family. The construction of a country house at Thorp Arch was the culmination of his efforts to establish himself as a full member of the landed gentry. Indeed it led directly to his appointment as a Deputy Lieutenant of the West Riding of Yorkshire in 1757 at the same time as his friends, Sir Henry Ibbetson and Sir Rowland Winn. He improved and developed the estate and capitalised on its natural resources, particularly its beds of limestone. A rough snapshot of his income taken from his cashbooks shows that in 1755 he received over £1,000 from rents, interest payments and sales of produce.<sup>28</sup> Roughly £300 of this income came purely from rents. Such a rental income would place him, at this time, at the lower end of the gentry scale but his total income would raise him well above average in one calculation of such thorny issues.<sup>29</sup> A fuller analysis of his wealth would involve much more research and demand an article in itself. For example, the annual balances in his account with Hoare's Bank in London increased from £2,898 in 1749 to £10,676 in 1760.<sup>30</sup> Between 1749 and 1760 he was able to finance the construction of the house and improve his financial position. However, he lost his son John at the age of 11 in 1751 and his most promising son and heir, William, at the age of 21 in 1754. The shock of William's death must have been doubly poignant at a time when his father was completing his country seat and putting, in effect, a seal on his position as a highly regarded member of the local landed élite.

For the rest of his life Gossip was faced with the conflict between his character and that of his new heir, George. Some samples of correspondence will have to serve as illustrations of the development of this relationship and to explain how it was that George was never allowed to fully inherit the family estates. George, Wilmer, Randall and Thomas were all much of an age (20, 13, 12, and 11 respectively) and were not destined for university. Each was in turn apprenticed to the growing hosiery trade in Leicester through their father's contacts with a Mr Bunney.

Gossip corresponded copiously with George, now his eldest son, constantly giving advice and urging him to live a sober and industrious life. As has been revealed, there was something in George's character that drew him into friendly contact with all and sundry. His father, who had steadily worked to establish himself in society and assiduously cultivated a vital reputation for probity, was very concerned that George should not let him down.<sup>31</sup> In 1754 he wrote:

<sup>26</sup> TA 3/2, letter book, copy letter, 11 January 1749, WG to William Gossip.

<sup>27</sup> Brett Harrison, 'Thorp Arch Hall 1749–1756, "dabbling a little in Mortar"', *Publications of Thoresby Society*, second series, 4 (1994), pp. 1–39.

<sup>28</sup> TA 7/7, cash book 1749–1771.

<sup>29</sup> Mingay, *Gentry*, p. 33.

<sup>30</sup> Harrison, 'Thorp Arch Hall', p. 5.

<sup>31</sup> B. L. Anderson, 'Money and the structure of credit in the 18th century', *Business History*, 12 (1970), p. 100.



I am not all ag[ains]t your subscribing to the Concert at Leicester, provided it is carried on by people of credit & fashion among you, & not merely by mercenary performers. Those hirelings are the very worst acquaintances you can make; I know the nature of the whole tribe of them. Jardini & his band after occasioning some disturbances in the family are all discovered & gone from Bramham Park. If your Concerts are to be attended with dancing I think you would do well not to engage in that part of the diversion for the reasons you gave me when here. I hope you have more spirit than to subject yourself to more slights . . .<sup>32</sup>

Ultimately the pressure told on George, who was so unhappy in business that in 1760 he ran away. Not only did he abandon his work of dealing in fashionable hosiery goods but he left a trail of debts in his wake. His father rode after him but, failing to find him, returned to Leicester with lame horses and the fear of bankruptcy looming over the brothers' partnership. On 4 October he wrote from Leicester to his wife:

I must set out again in search of this wrongheaded youth; for his non appearance stops everything & may soon have bad consequences & I now despair of his facing Thorp Arch without my fetching him or being driven thither by want or disease. I wish I could divide myself in 3 for poor Wimmy [Wilmer] presses me to stay as long as I can with him, my inclinations carry me home, & my necessities force me away in pursuit of the author of all our distress. Poor wretch I dare say he suffers for it sufficiently: intemperance is but a momentary cordial for a troubled mind: some cool moments must intervene & stab him to the heart. They have just brought me an account of money due & which ought in a regular course to be p[ai]d immediately, amounting to £1274, a sum I cannot advance if I was willing.<sup>33</sup>

Randall was also unsettled, behaving badly, and there was clearly a rivalry with Wilmer, which made it difficult for them to work together. Increasingly Wilmer appeared as the reliable figure holding the business together and Gossip came to depend on him more and more as the other brothers demonstrated their unfitness for commerce.

When George returned to Thorp Arch in November 1760, he was ill and unable to talk. His increasing debts spoke for him. Gossip agreed that he should retire from business but extracted a heavy price. He barred the entail to his fortune and reasserted complete control over the dispersal of the family estates. Clearly under the parental marriage settlement the eldest son was tenant in tail of most of the family estates. Such a relationship might have made them vulnerable to his debts. Sometime in November 1761 George joined in a common recovery which effectively disinherited him. A resettlement would, under normal circumstances, have taken place upon his marriage.<sup>34</sup> Rumours were spread that he had been taken advantage of when drunk, perhaps an all too common occurrence! Gossip requested to know from the lawyer concerned what state his son had been in on the occasion. The answer deserves to be quoted in full as it describes the method and family involvement in the legal process:

I am sorry to hear that there are any persons so malevolent as to traduce your character with so groundless & scandalous an aspersion that you should take advantage of your sons being in liquor to procure him to suffer A recovery to bar the entail of your estate wch you made upon your marriage wch is without the least foundation in truth and wch I am sure no one of sense or character that knows you can give the least credit to. The acknowledgement of the warrant of attorney for the suffering the recovery was taken at my house Mr Randal Wilmer was one of the Commissioners who took the acknowledgement from Mrs Gossip and your son. Mr John Wilmer was the attorney who ingrossed the deeds to lead the uses of the recovery and sent for the dedimus for the taking the acknowledgement of the warrant of attorney to enter into the voucher were both present as well as myself — your son did not come to my house till sometime after you and

<sup>32</sup>. TA 7/6, letter book 1753–1757, copy letter, 1754, WG to George Gossip.

<sup>33</sup>. TA 7/9, letter book 1757–1760 [loose sheet in rear of volume].

<sup>34</sup>. Barbara English and John Saville, *Strict Settlement, A Guide for Historians* (Hull, 1983), p. 33.



Mrs Gossip were there and appeared to me to be as sober then as I ever saw him in my life and if it had been otherwise It cannot be imagined his two Unkles would have been concerned in it or permitted so scandalous and unfair a transaction or have concurred in it and I can say for myself that I would not have permitted it to be done in my house nor would I have been A witness to so unjust a transaction . . . W Stables.<sup>35</sup>

George and Randall left the business and pursued newly fashionable careers in the army. George was, nevertheless, soon back to his old ways, running up debts that he was unable to settle himself and failing to communicate with his father. He wrote from Winchester in November 1762:

Those confounded debts I contracted when in Yorkshire are right to a farthing, if you knew my sentiments at that time with regard to my health, they were quite desperate, tho' I put on as cheerful an appearance even in the worst of it when I was in the gayest company as it was possible, & was look'd upon as a young man of uncommon vivacity yet I had many restless hours when those people enjoying a sound repose whose conscience had nothing to accuse them of. I had no other prospect then but that a period would soon be put to a life quite burthensome by the repeated shocks my constitution had rec[eive]d or by the common fate of the profession I had just attached myself to. That prospect is now at an end — yet such is my fondness for this way of life, and the variety that it affords that wh[i]ch way to turn myself when we are broke, I know not, but that must be the subject of another letter . . .<sup>36</sup>

Gossip had in 1761, using his friendship with Stephen Croft, purchased for George a commission as a lieutenant in the Third Regiment of Foot, 'The Buffs', under Captain Croft (Stephen's son). A pause in the Seven Years' War led to the disbandment of some regiments and the placing of others on half-time pay. George was one of many affected in this way. Nevertheless, the letter reveals the clear trait towards the over dramatic and slightly hysterical in George's character. He was always complaining of ill health. By this time he had also something significant to reveal and his conscience did indeed have something to accuse him of. He had married, inappropriately, in the spring of 1762 and without consulting his parents as to the suitability of his bride. He did not know how to tell them and consequently tried to avoid any confrontation. Marriage was the prime means by which families preserved their status and wealth.<sup>37</sup> By marrying someone of equal status and bringing estates together the family's position could be enhanced and ensure greater opportunities for succeeding generations. In marrying a lady of a lower social class George was merely assisting her upward mobility.<sup>38</sup>

The following year George disappeared again. His manservant in London was reduced to appealing to William Gossip for subsistence. Gossip asked his solicitor, Mayer, to place an advertisement in the *London Evening Post & General Evening Post* in July 1763:

G G esqr an officer in one of the New raised regiments of Foot, lately reduced, is desired forthwith to apply to Mr Mayer of Grays Inn (either personally or by letter) where he will hear of something to his satisfaction.<sup>39</sup>

On 25 July George wrote from Rochester answering the advertisement: 'I hope the satisfaction there promise'd will prove so, if not, beware of extremitys, I will submit to

<sup>35</sup>. TA 3/3, letter book, 1760–1761 [loose letter folded in front cover], 10 November 1761, W Stables, York to WG at TA.

<sup>36</sup>. TA 24/2, letter, 21 November 1762, George to WG at Thorp Arch.

<sup>37</sup>. Mingay, *Gentry*, pp. 108–17.

<sup>38</sup>. Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People, England 1727–1783* (Oxford, 1989), pp. 109–16.

<sup>39</sup>. TA 24/3, letter, 29 June 1763, John Mayer, Grays Inn to WG at Thorp Arch.



none, & shall come prepared against any . . .'<sup>40</sup> Gossip had to try to explain to Mayer why George should feel this way:

When he went last from this place to join his Co[mpany] at Sheffield, he was much out of order & to lessen the fatigue of that days journey I went with him in my Postchaise as far as Ferrybridge. This he took into his head as a plot lade to sieze and confine him & therefore privately took a loaded pistol with him in the chaise, with a resolution as he has since declared of shooting the first person that laid hands on him & as no exception was made the Ball in that case might probably have lodged in my breast. But this foolish imagination arose only from his own conviction of having deserved this treatment, which several young gents of this country have met with from similar conduct'.<sup>41</sup>

There was more to the case than Gossip suspected. It emerged that George had been married for 18 months without telling his father. Try as he might Gossip could not get George to tell him the truth about the matter. Gossip was reduced to doubting even the fact of the marriage being legal. He asked a friend to check the register<sup>42</sup> and then wrote to the Bishop of London (a contemporary schoolfellow) for confirmation:

My Lord permit me to beg your Lordships assistance in clearing up an affair which has given Mrs Gossip & me a great deal of uneasiness. My eldest son George after a long course of intemperance & irregularity is said to have married to a Mantua Makers daughter of Hallifax on May 5 1762 at St Brides in London. She was certainly in London at that time & he likewise just come up from Devizes about some regimental affairs; in such a very poor condition of health that he himself did not look upon his life as above 3 mo[nth]s value. Particularly that very day the 5 May 1762 was confined to his bed in the influenza (then an Epidemical complaint) with a violent headache & incessant cough that he was obliged to be blouded & that would scarcely permit him to write or sit up in bed almost the whole day, his pain not permitting him to lie down. This I copy from his own L[et]t[er] of that date. I naturally had recourse to the Register. The Return from one of the persons enquiring was that he found George Gossip & Maria Copley under 5 May 1762 & no more; from the other that Geo Gossip & Maria Copley spinster were married at St Brides by virtue of the Bp of Londons licence 5 May 1762 being a special licence no witnesses. These accounts being far from satisfactory & connected with the circumstances of a Debt of 30 Gns contracted by my son abt that time to one Mr Bargrave of D[octo]rs Commons lead too naturally to a suspicion of unwarrantable practices. This Gentleman is an absolute stranger to me & therefore pardon me if from these circumstances I form a wrong opinion of him. As this transaction was under yr Lordships Jurisdiction, I hope you will excuse me desiring your Lordships assistance in coming after the truth. It is in vain to expect to have these inconsistencies cleared up by my son, if I am wrong in my suspicions. If I am right, I am fully persuaded your Lordship will be glad of an opportunity of preventing such irregularities (if any) in your officers for the future, tho' irremediable as to myself. He owns her as his wife, tho there are very many circumstantial reasons to believe they were not married at the time abovementioned which I will not trouble your Lordship with . . .<sup>43</sup>

Gossip clearly wanted the marriage to be invalid but the Bishop sent him a copy of the full entry, with witnesses:

upon the whole it appears to me that my officers and clergy have proceeded according to Law in this affair; therefore fear that the calamity your son has brought upon you and your family, is fixed upon himself for life but on your part shou'd be submitted to with patience, as it can't be remedied . . .<sup>44</sup>

<sup>40</sup>. TA 24/3, letter, 29 June 1763, John Mayer, Grays Inn to WG at Thorp Arch, contains copy of George's reply.

<sup>41</sup>. TA 21/6, letter book, copy letter, 6 August 1763, WG to John Mayer.

<sup>42</sup>. TA 24/3, letter, 12 Oct. 1763, from W. Stables at York to WG at Thorp Arch.

<sup>43</sup>. TA 21/6, letter book, 26 November 1763.

<sup>44</sup>. TA 24/3, letter, 3 December 1763, Ric[hard] London, Fulham.



In society's terms the marriage was a calamity. George, by this time an army officer and heir to a landed estate, had transgressed socially-accepted standards by marrying the daughter of a tradesman.<sup>45</sup> Despite the fact that William Gossip had engaged himself and his younger sons in the hosiery business he was regarded by his contemporaries as a gentleman and, of course, the future prospects of his family were compromised. The distinction between trade and land was a fine one, however.<sup>46</sup>

Friends interceded with Gossip over the matter, Mr Mayer stressing, after inviting the couple to tea with him, that

she is really a pretty person & she seems very sensible, & of an affable disposition, & if she is of the temper she appears to be her only want seems fortune — Both he & she are under great dejection of spirits on account of the present face of the affairs, but excuse me when I say I yet hope you'll quickly alter the scene & attend to overtures of a son now ready to throw himself at your Feet & Reform his Conduct . . .<sup>47</sup>

Gossip was not to be easily reconciled to his son, as he explained to Mayer:

after all I must be the best judge of his Conduct & what treatment his demerits require from me . . . It is a terrible thing by a long series of falsities to destroy that confidence which ought to subsist betwixt a father & son. It can no way be restored but by as long a series of contrary conduct supported by facts and not mere words. He is very full of Incomiums on the oeconomy of his Rib as he stiles her but I can't think the paying at the rate of £60 a year for lodging & board in a country village ill situated any proof of it (not much preferable to their continuing in London). I am sure his finances will not allow of it, which with his half pay will permit him to spend £100 a year and no more. I can't think his living near London of any moment to his views now & therefore imagine he might find out some cheaper place to retire to & in a more healthful situation (which should be attended to) tho' at a greater distance from the metropolis. [George was living at North Ockenden in Essex and had complained of having fits of the Ague as the 'fogs in Essex are so excessive thick that almost every family is affected more or less with it, but the Inhabitants in that Neighbourhood regard it no more than a fit of the Headach'.] He has wrote for a Remittance of £40 more which I shall send him as soon as I get a Bill, which I expect in a few days . . .<sup>48</sup>

Gossip was even reduced to writing to his unknown daughter-in-law, in a tone which reveals his suspicions as to her motives for marrying his son:

Madam, after the Step you have taken so much ag[ains]t my inclinations you may perhaps be surprized at an address from me. It is only designed to inform you of the true state of y[ou]r husbands affairs. If I am truly informed of his Debts, he and you may afford to spend with his half pay £100 a year betwixt you & no more. This sh[oul]d be no confinement to you who had naturally no expectations of partaking of such an income. As it is s[ai]d you have a great influence over him, I hope you will exert it, in bringing him to this way of thinking & not flatter yourself with greater expectations. Many people live decently with pretty large families upon this or less; but then they don't throw away £60 a year for board and lodging.<sup>49</sup>

Nevertheless, Gossip continued to pay out money to George, while at the same time expressing his extreme dissatisfaction with his behaviour. He was clearly a loving parent driven to distraction by his children, for not only George but also Randall and Thomas caused him problems. On 29 November 1763 in a letter to Wilmer declining an invitation for Randall to visit Leicester, he wrote:

<sup>45</sup>. WYAS, Calderdale, Halifax Parish Register, baptism entry: '5 July 1739 Maria daughter of Cornclius Copley, Halifax, dresser'.

<sup>46</sup>. R. G. Wilson, *Gentlemen Merchants. The merchant community in Leeds 1700–1830* (Manchester, 1971), pp. 220–37.

<sup>47</sup>. TA 24/3, letter 3 December 1763, J. Mayer to WG.

<sup>48</sup>. TA 21/6, letter book, 1763, copy letter, 10 Dec 1763 WG to John Mayer.

<sup>49</sup>. TA 21/6, letter book, 1763, copy letter, 21 Dec. 1763, WG to 'Madam' [Mrs George Gossip].



perhaps we may bring him up with us in spring if he will deserve that indulgence by a proper & respectful behaviour to his mother and me; at present his manner of treating us is highly disgusting. In the main point he is very good: for he keeps steadily to his resolution of avoiding all expence till he recovers full what he had overrun of his income: about February he will have money in his pocket . . .<sup>50</sup>

A year earlier he had had cause to write to Thomas as the brothers were falling out: I am very sorry to hear by Randall that there is any coolness between your brother W[ilme]r and you: I spoke to him about it when he was down and hope he will for the future be more tender over you. You know he is Rought but very honest and anxious to have business go on as it sh[oul]d. He says you make frequent mistakes in the Books which to be sure my Dear is a very mortifying circumstance to a master and you could find it very highly resented by a stranger, which cons[ideration] I hope will make my Dear put up with any hasty expression that may escape him upon those occasions. These mistakes may be at present a great detriment to me, as soon to him, and afterwards to yourself when you enter upon business. As God be thanked your capacity is not below the common level I am persuaded it is owing to inattention only; & therefore when you are employed in anything of Numbers, I wd recommend it to you not to let your thoughts waver upon any other subject tho' commendable in itself. Cashing up requires y[ou]r whole application: other subjects must be entertained when you are at leisure from business. Don't my Dear Lad let what I have said sink your spirits: be cheerful & assiduous & I don't doubt you will find business grow daily more and more easy & consequently pleasant to you. My greatest happiness will be to see a truly brotherly love prevail & increase amongst you all, with a sincere mutual affection as that of yr father and mother W & AG.<sup>51</sup>

Gossip was very exacting, shrewd and businesslike. He found it impossible to understand George and tried to resolve fraternal rivalries without, as far as possible, showing favouritism. Perhaps his earlier devotion to William had served to undermine his relationships with his younger sons. Yet the fascination of the relationships remain. In the spring of 1764 Gossip took Randall, who was very unwell, to Bristol Hot Wells and went on himself to Bath to take the waters where he heard a rumour that he was quick to report to Revd Dr Legh at Halifax on 24 April:

This very morning at the Pump Room the secret of his [GGs] precipitate marriage (hitherto mysterious) was unravelled to me. There is a child in being, as I am told, near 2 years old. However, that Madam was in a teeming condition in May 1762 and c[oul]d keep the secret no longer. I give you this as I so lately rec[eive]d it. I shall learn more in a little time. Truth will come out at last.<sup>52</sup>

Surprisingly, this was all tittle-tattle but demonstrated how ready William was to believe the worst. Of course it was hotly denied by George, who pursued the matter until he discovered the author of the rumour and produced evidence of a sort to back up his defence.

That same year George went to London to try to obtain an interview with Lord Clive, who was to be appointed governor of Bengal, and a commission in the East India Company's service. There were at this time many half-pay officers desperate to get a more lucrative position. India was a magnet for them. On 14 April 1764 he wrote to his father:

I went this morning to attend upon his L[or]d[shi]p there were many other Gentlemen upon the same errand, but all disappointed, for he went out before 9 o'clock to the Treasury & he has been no more visible all day. It is very difficult to get access to him now, and no wonder he has so little

<sup>50</sup>. TA 21/6, letter book, 1763, copy letter, 29 November 1763, WG to Wilmer Gossip.

<sup>51</sup>. TA 21/5, letter book, 1762, copy letter, 14 October 1862, WG to Thomas Gossip.

<sup>52</sup>. TA 21/7, letter book 1764–1765, copy letter, WG at Mrs Langhorns, in Hall Street, Bath to Dr Legh.

time to himself. I shall go again tomorrow if I fail in two or three times attending I will by some means or other get myself introduced to his Lordship . . .<sup>53</sup>

Even with powerful friends pressing his case, he was unsuccessful. Three days later he asked his father to write to Lady Dawes on his behalf on the advice of Mr Lascelles:<sup>54</sup>

she is an intimate Acquaintance of Lady Clive's, old Mrs Clive, and the whole female branch of that family, and he says the women may be more powerful advocates with his L[or]dship than any & more successful but at the same time desires you will not mention his name to Lady D[awes] as it may not be proper to have her understand he gave the hint . . .<sup>55</sup>

However, such measures failed and George purchased a commission as a Lieutenant in the 3rd Regiment of Foot at Minorca<sup>56</sup> and by 1766 he was seeking to purchase a Captaincy. His urging had persuaded William to write to Edwin Lascelles, by this time a Member of Parliament, to obtain his support in obtaining permission for this exercise. In exasperation his father wrote:

Independence of the Great I always loved & took care to live in such a manner as not to make their favours absolutely necessary for the support of my family which I brought up in a manner suitable to those principles but alas you demolished the whole fabrick in a moment: to repair this you talk of seeking a new method of living at this time of day & sollicite L[or]d etc without any pretensions to ask favours.

He went on directly to discuss his plans for the settlement of his estate, revealing his concerns for Thomas' situation, still in business in Leicester:

If I had any . . . they all ought to be employed for your brother Toms unprovided condition. . . . I have made my will & hope for the last time (& possibly I may add a codicil to it) & in it have made some provision for you for your wife suitable to her station before you married her & your only child. If you have more, as I have reason to suspect & will not let me know, you and your family must blame yourself for that concealment . . .<sup>57</sup>

William Gossip did not die until 1772,<sup>58</sup> before which time he had, to a degree, reconciled himself with George, made friends with his daughter-in-law and got to know his grandchildren. Randall died of consumption in 1768. Wilmer retired from business in 1770 and returned to Thorp Arch to assist his ailing father in running the estate. Only Thomas, Wilmer and George outlived their father. Although the main body of his will contained the phrase 'and sorry I am that by his undutiful behaviour to me he hath rendered himself unworthy in my opinion of those greater honours I once intended for him . . . ' in each succeeding codicil there was an added provision for George.<sup>59</sup> William established a strict settlement by his will allowing George a life interest in trust in part of the Gossip estates in Thorn, Fishlake, Hatfield, Hatfield Woodhouse and Stainforth with 'divers remainders to William his son for life and his sons one after another in seniority and priority of birth and the heirs male of their several and respective bodies the elder of the sons always preferred . . .'.<sup>60</sup> Should there be no male or female heirs

<sup>53</sup>. TA 13/3, letter, G. Gossip at Mr Fishers, Cabinet maker, Gt Portland Street, Cavendish Square to WG at the Hot Wells, Bristol.

<sup>54</sup>. Lady Dawes was Edwin Lascelles's mother-in-law.

<sup>55</sup>. TA 13/3, letter, 17 April 1764, G. Gossip to WG, Bath.

<sup>56</sup>. TA 13/3, letter, 18 August 1764, G. Gossip at Mr Fishers in Gt Portland Street to WG at Thorp Arch.

<sup>57</sup>. TA 21/8, letter book 1765–1767, copy letter, 7 March 1766, WG to George Gossip.

<sup>58</sup>. *Leeds Intelligencer*, Tuesday April 7, 1772, announced his death: 'A few days ago died at his seat at Thorp Arch in the 67th year of his age, William Gossip Esq., a Gentleman of great learning and integrity'.

<sup>59</sup>. TA 15/11/9, copy, will of WG.

<sup>60</sup>. English and Saville, *Strict Settlement*, p. 102.



then Wilmer was to inherit. After George's death a jointure of no more than £50 a year was to be paid to his widow, Maria.

A similar life interest in the bulk of his land, including the Thorp Arch estate, was left to Wilmer, who had an only daughter, Lucy, who died in infancy in 1772. It was to be the children of Thomas who inherited the life interest in the family estates from Wilmer. Thomas's grandson, Randall, married Christiana Marshall and inherited estates in Newton Kyme and Laughton en le Morthen from his wife's brother, William. He assumed the name and arms of Hatfeild in 1844. By 1873, Randall's son, Thomas Godfrey Hatfeild of Thorp Arch Hall, held 1,568 acres in Yorkshire and his widow, Mrs Christiana Hatfeild of Skellow Grange, 1,247 acres there.<sup>61</sup> They were both described as landed proprietors in the 1881 census return for Skellow Grange, Burghwallis. Christiana, aged 80, was living in some style assisted by ten servants. George's only son William inherited his father's life interest in the Thorn, Fishlake, Hatfield, Hatfield Woodhouse and Stainforth estate and married Anne daughter and heiress of John Hatfeild of Hatfield in 1787.<sup>62</sup> His eldest son, William Hatfeild Gossip, married Sarah Margaret, daughter and heiress of John Wriglesworth, in 1823 and their eldest son, also William Hatfeild Gossip, assumed by royal licence in 1844 the surname and arms of De Rodes and succeeded to the estates of his uncle at Barlborough, Derbyshire, becoming William Hatfeild De Rodes of Barlborough Hall. He married the Hon. Sophia-Félicité, daughter of the Hon. and Reverend Alfred Curzon, and sister of Lord Scarsdale, in 1854. The total estate in Yorkshire and Derbyshire comprised 2,269 acres by 1873.

William Gossip had, despite his initial difficulties with George and unavoidable demographic failures, managed to guide his heirs on to the path of accumulating landed wealth by his will and would have been relieved and gratified to see his kinship so well established. This kinship's experience serves to underline the fact that settlements made by will could last much longer than settlements made at marriage — in this case over a century.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>61</sup>. *Return of Owners of Land, 1873* (London, 1875), p. 45.

<sup>62</sup>. Foster and Green, pp. 130–34.

<sup>63</sup>. English and Saville, *Strict Settlement*, pp. 114–15.

## THE ROBINSONS OF THORP GREEN

By Peter Holmes

*The family of Rev. Edmund Robinson of Thorp Green was thrust into the limelight with the publication in Mrs Gaskell's *Life of Charlotte Brontë* of the allegation that Lydia Robinson, Edmund's wife, had seduced Patrick Branwell Brontë, tutor in the household. By a nice irony of archivism the estate papers of the family were deposited at the Brontë Parsonage Museum, and they provide the basis for this article. The origins of this gentry estate are explored, and attention is paid to the children of Edmund and Lydia, who feature in the letters of Charlotte Brontë.*

Few people can have been so suddenly catapulted from obscurity to fame, or notoriety, as the Revd Edmund Robinson and his wife Lydia. In 1857 Mrs Gaskell published *The Life of Charlotte Brontë*, and in it alleged that Mrs Robinson had seduced Patrick Branwell Brontë, the tutor of her son, also Edmund Robinson, with the result that Brontë had suffered a mental breakdown and subsequently died. As is well known, Mrs Gaskell's publisher withdrew the first and second editions of the book in which these claims had been made when threatened with legal action by the relatives of Mrs Robinson, but later writers have seldom been able to resist the temptation to discuss the matter, and little that has been written about Mrs and Mr Robinson has been complimentary. The purpose of this article is to provide a little more information about the Robinsons than is currently available, not in the hope that it can solve the question of whether Mrs Gaskell was right or not, but simply to give a fuller picture of a family which, for better or worse, played an important part in the life of both Branwell and Anne Brontë, who also worked, as a governess, at their home in Thorp Green.<sup>1</sup>

### MANN HORSFIELD (1727/8–96), FORGOTTEN SHERIFF OF YORKSHIRE

Thorp Green is in the township of Thorp(e) Underwood(s), and the parish of Little Ouseburn, formerly in the West Riding, now in North Yorkshire, on the River Ouse about twelve miles from the city of York. There were 1,988 acres in the Robinson estate when it was sold in 1866.<sup>2</sup> The land was largely let to tenant farmers in farms of about a hundred acres. At the heart of the estate was Thorp Green Hall which is now known as Thorpe Underwood Hall, having been rebuilt about a hundred years ago after a

<sup>1</sup> My thanks are due to Robin Greenwood for valuable information on the Robinson family and their connections, and also to Anne Dinsdale, Librarian to the Brontë Society for helping me with the Robinson Papers [RP] at the Brontë Parsonage Museum [BPM]. There is a very useful typescript guide to RP at BPM, compiled in 1970 by Amy G. Foster, one of Anne Dinsdale's predecessors; in some instances I have relied on this guide, although generally I have consulted the originals. There is a good introduction to RP in Joan Rees, 'The Robinson Papers', *Brontë Society Transactions* [BST], 18:4 (1984), pp. 299–300. The best writers on the Brontës to refer to the Robinsons are: Juliet Barker, *The Brontës* (London, 1994); Edward Chitham, *A Life of Anne Brontë* (Oxford, 1991), esp. chaps 5–8; Chitham, *The Poems of Anne Brontë* (London, 1979), introduction; Tom Winnifrith, *The Brontës and their Background* (London, 1973); Winifrid Gerin, *Branwell Brontë* (London, 1972); Daphne du Maurier, *The Infernal World of Branwell Brontë* (London, 1960). My debt to these authors will become clear in this paper; I have tended not to repeat the points they make, nor to stray far into literary criticism.

<sup>2</sup> BPM, RP, S55. There has been a great deal of variation in spelling Thorp and Underwood in the various combinations with Green and Grange over the years. I have arbitrarily dropped the final 'e' and the 's' in my spellings.



disastrous fire. In the days of the Brontës it was a reasonably large house with, downstairs, in addition to the kitchen etc., a study, dining room, drawing room, breakfast room and, of course, schoolroom, and upstairs perhaps a dozen bedrooms for the family and staff.<sup>3</sup> As we might expect there were numerous servants: the 1841 census lists three male and seven female servants. Using the standard definition developed in 1873 by John Bateman (probably a relative of Mrs Robinson) and then followed by modern social historians, an estate of this size placed the Robinsons among the 'squirearchy', a term used to describe landowners from the lesser gentry.<sup>4</sup>

In 1840 this estate had been in the hands of the Robinsons for less than half a century. Until 1796 it had belonged to Mann Horsfield, high sheriff of the county of Yorkshire in 1774.<sup>5</sup> He was the grandson of Robert Horsfield (d. 1713), a successful tailor and sheriff of the city of York in 1672–73. Robert Horsfield had come from Hemsworth to York to seek his fortune and, four times married, he had at least eighteen children, many dying as infants. One of those that lived to be an adult was Jeremiah, (1686–1732) who married Sarah Mann (d. 1753).<sup>6</sup> She was coheiress not only to Richard Mann of York but also, through her mother Dinah *née* Kirkby, to Mark Kirkby of Sledmere (d. 1718), a rich merchant from Hull, one of whose other daughters married Richard Sykes, thus bringing the Sledmere property to the Sykes family.<sup>7</sup> So, Mann Horsfield combined as his name suggests the inheritance of two rich York families, in addition to his association with a mercantile fortune in Hull.

The Manns had long associations with Thorp Green. The property there had before the Dissolution belonged to the monks of Fountains Abbey who had depopulated a village at Thorp Underwood and probably another at Kir(k)by Ouseburn in order to establish a grange there.<sup>8</sup> Since the fifteenth century members of the Man(n) family had served the abbots as bursar, chamberlain and, after 1524, as lessees of the manor of Thorp Underwood. The grange of Thorp Underwood was used by the monks for hunting, and contained a house where monks would stop on their way to York. The house in which Branwell Brontë lodged at Thorp Green is called the Monks' House and is a relic of the old monastic establishment. Another branch of the Mann family also served the abbots of Fountains at Bramley Grange, Kirkby Malzeard. When the abbey was dissolved, Manns in both places were able to profit, the family at Bramley more than those at Thorp Green, since they were soon registering their pedigrees with the heralds when Yorkshire was visited. The Thorp Green Manns were mere yeomen in the parish register

<sup>3</sup> BPM, RP, S93/7. There are illustrations of Thorp Green Hall in *Victorian Ouseburn; George Whitehead's Journal*, ed. Helier Hibbs (Ouseburn, 1990), pp. 89, 296; and a photograph in *BST*, 12:5, p. 381.

<sup>4</sup> John Bateman, *The Great Landowners of Great Britain and Ireland* (1883 edn., reprinted 1971), preface; F. M. L. Thompson, *English Landed Society in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1963), pp. 111–13; G. E. Mingay, *English Landed Society in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1963), p. 23.

<sup>5</sup> In a recent work on the high sheriffs and lord lieutenants of Yorkshire, Horsfield is the only sheriff about whom no information could be found; indeed he is even called Marmaduke. W. Mark Ormrod, *The Lord Lieutenants and High Sheriffs of Yorkshire* (Barnsley, 2000), p. 167. Horsfield certainly is a little elusive. He was 68 when he died in 1796, according to the death notice in the *Leeds Mercury* (30 April 1796), and hence was born in 1727/8, probably in York.

<sup>6</sup> Robert H. Skaife, 'The Register of Marriages of York Minster', *YAJ*, 2 (1873), p. 101 note 15, p. 336 note 161, and see also p. 107 note 32; *Register of the Freeman of the City of York, II (1559–1759)*, ed. Francis Collins, Surtees Society, 102 (1900), pp. 125, 128; Bernard Johnson, *The Acts and Ordinances of the Company of Merchant Taylors of the City of York* (n.p., n.d., 1952?), pp. 77–79; Royal Commission for Historical Monuments, *City of York V* (1981), pp. 2, 10.

<sup>7</sup> Gordon Jackson, *Hull in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1972), pp. 113, 408; Peter Roebuck, *Yorkshire Baronets 1640–1760* (Hull, 1980), pp. 296, 338; Barbara English, *The Great Landowners of East Yorkshire 1535–1910* (London, 1990), pp. 28–29; J. Fairfax-Blakeborough, *Sykes of Sledmere* (London, 1929), pp. 18–20, 224–25. Among the title deeds in RP several mention Kirkbys.

<sup>8</sup> M. W. Beresford, 'The Lost Villages of Yorkshire III,' *YAJ*, 38 (1955), pp. 216, 234, 236.



in Tudor times, but were called gentlemen by the seventeenth century. There was a story that after the battle of Marston Moor a riderless horse, its saddlebags full of gold, walked into the yard at Thorp Grange, enriching the Manns. Such a story suggests that there was some increase in the wealth of the family at this time, though perhaps the real explanation for this was that Manns took themselves off to York to make money.<sup>9</sup> Mann Horsfield's maternal grandfather, Richard Mann, was buried in 1712 in the church of St Maurice, York and is described as a merchant. He already owned some of the family property in Thorp Green which he left to his daughter Sarah, the mother of Mann Horsfield.<sup>10</sup> Sarah received more property in the vicinity from her uncle, Charles Mann of York, and probably also from her husband, Jeremiah Horsfield, whose father Robert had been involved in a land deal in Thorp Underwood in conjunction with Richard and Charles Mann as early as 1686.<sup>11</sup>

All this property then came to Mann Horsfield, who made further purchases in the area during the mid-eighteenth century, although he had property elsewhere too. The Kirkby inheritance through his mother, Sarah (d. 1753) brought him the manor of Eske in the East Riding, which in 1787 he sold to the prominent York nurserymen, George and John Telford.<sup>12</sup> Mann Horsfield was probably responsible for building, or rebuilding, Thorp Green Hall, although there are no records to show this. By 1753 his address is given as Thorp Green but in 1780 he was said to be living at Whixley, a village a short distance away, perhaps because Thorp Green Hall was being rebuilt.<sup>13</sup> He had seven male servants at Whixley.<sup>14</sup> Horsfield had no children as both his marriage partners were quite old when he married them. His first wife, whom he married in 1768, was Sarah Cass, widow of Richard Cass, aged 50 at her marriage while he was only 40. She was from the prominent York family of Yoward and was probably already related to Horsfield to some degree. The Yowards came originally to York from Cleveland where they were small landowners who, like the Manns, first acquired property at the Dissolution.<sup>15</sup> The Casses were a family to be found in some numbers in the vicinity of the Ouseburns, some of whom the great Victorian historian Bishop Stubbs counted among his ancestors.<sup>16</sup> In 1780 Sarah died at Harrogate where she had probably gone to recuperate from an illness, and was buried at Great Ouseburn. Horsfield was remarried in 1784, this time to Mary Robinson, another widow, aged 45. She came to live at Thorp Green with her two children, Edmund and Anne.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>9</sup> *Memorials of the Abbey of St Mary of Fountains*, ed. John R. Walbran, Surtees Society, 42 (1863), pp. 123–25, 146, 242–50, 259, 321–22, 415–16; H. D. E., 'Extracts from the Parish Registers of Little Ouseburn relating to the family of Mann 1565–1694', *Genealogist*, 7 (1883), pp. 237–79.

<sup>10</sup> F. Drake, *Eboracum* (London, 1736), p. 254; there is a useful series of typescript and manuscript genealogical extracts relating to the Mann family, compiled by J. H. Mann and dated 1944, in the Library of the Society of Genealogists, London.

<sup>11</sup> BPM, RP, 49(1).

<sup>12</sup> Victoria County History, *Yorkshire, East Riding* VI (Oxford, 1989), p. 280.

<sup>13</sup> Borthwick Institute, York [BI], Prerogative Court, York, bond to administer the goods of Sarah Horsfield, proved 17 July 1753.

<sup>14</sup> J. J. Cartwright, 'List of persons in Yorkshire who paid tax on male servants in 1780', *YAJ*, 14 (1898), p. 72.

<sup>15</sup> North Yorkshire Record Office, Little Ouseburn Parish Register, 18 April 1768; John Graves, *The History of Cleveland* (1808; reprint, Stockton-on-Tees, 1972), pp. 269, 432; John Walker Ord, *The History and Antiquities of Cleveland* (1846; reprint, Stockton-on-Tees, 1972), pp. 239, 346. Graves mistakenly describes Mrs Elizabeth Robinson (who married Edmund, d. 1800) as Mann Horsfield's daughter; perhaps an understandable mistake to make.

<sup>16</sup> *Genealogical history of the family of the late Bishop William Stubbs*, ed. Francis Collins, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series, 55 (1915), esp. pp. 19–20.

<sup>17</sup> NYRO, Little Ouseburn Parish Register, 3 Jan. 1784 (marriage); Great Ouseburn Parish Register, 4 June 1780 (burial of Sarah Horsfield); *Leeds Mercury*, 6 June 1780.



MARY ROBINSON *née* THORP (1738–93)

Mary Robinson had been born Thorp and was from a family that was also to be associated somewhat later with the Robinsons, when in 1817 her grand-daughter, Mary, married Charles Thorp, who was also her nephew. The Thorps were in a sense another York family. John Thorp(e), a grocer, was sheriff of York in 1689, and descended from an ancient yeomanry/gentry family, the Thorpes of Thorpe in Holderness.<sup>18</sup> John's grandson, Thomas, was Mary's father. He was educated successively at Edinburgh, Oxford and Cambridge Universities, and became vicar of Chillingham in Northumberland where Mary was baptized in 1738, and then vicar of Berwick-upon-Tweed.<sup>19</sup> Sir Henry Liddell (later Baron Ravensworth) said of him in 1744: 'what I have seen of him makes me imagine him a civilized, cheerful, man'.<sup>20</sup> Thomas Thorp appears in the list of freemen of York in 1737–38, when he was made free of the city as a grocer, the record also acknowledging him as 'now clerk', or clergyman.<sup>21</sup> Presumably he had inherited his family business (perhaps from an uncle) and needed to gain his freedom in order for the firm to continue to trade. For the next two generations, the Thorps were a most successful and talented family, closely associated with the diocese of Durham. Mary's brother, Charles Thorp, was a doctor of divinity, fellow of Peterhouse, Cambridge, Archdeacon of Northumberland and translator of Newton into English. His son, another Charles (who married Mary Robinson in 1817) was an even more imposing figure, also an Archdeacon, fellow of University College, Oxford, and co-founder of Durham University which he served as Rector from 1831 to 1865.<sup>22</sup>

## MAJOR EDMUND ROBINSON (d. 1774)

Mann Horsfield's second wife, Mary Robinson, was the widow of Major Edmund Robinson. In 1753, when Mann Horsfield was bound before the Archbishop's court to administer the goods of his mother, Sarah, who had died intestate, his fellow bondsman was one Edmund Robinson of Thorp Green.<sup>23</sup> This was possibly the future Major Robinson or a relative of his. It has been suggested that the Robinsons of Thorp Green were related to the family of Lord Goderich, the Robinsons of Newby Hall, but evidence for this is not easy to come by. A letter written by Branwell Brontë has been interpreted as supporting this view; but the letter is difficult to read at this point and may refer to a titled relative of Mrs Robinson.<sup>24</sup> I know of no hard genealogical data which connects the families, although it does seem plausible that there should be some link, because the Newby Hall family had strong ties to the city of York, and this would bring them into the same sort of orbit as the Manns, Horsfields, Thorps and Yowards.<sup>25</sup> It is possible that there was some distant kinship between the Robinsons of Thorp Green and Mann Horsfield before he married Mary Robinson. Thus in 1723 Sara Mann, Mann Horsfield's

<sup>18</sup> J. Hodgson, *History of Northumberland* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1840, reprint 1973), iv, pp. 336–37; Richard Welford, *Men of Mark Twixt Tyne and Tweed* (London, 1895), III, pp. 521–26.

<sup>19</sup> J. and J. A. Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigiensis (to 1751)* (Cambridge, 1927).

<sup>20</sup> Edward Hughes, *North Country Life in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1952), pp. 338–40, cf. 250.

<sup>21</sup> *Register of the freemen of the City of York*, II, pp. 247, cf. 168, 172, 135, 155.

<sup>22</sup> C. E. Whiting, *The University of Durham 1832–1932* (London, 1932), esp. pp. 32–33, 37, 43, 74 (portrait), 111; *Dictionary of National Biography* [DNB], s.v. Thorp(e).

<sup>23</sup> BI, bond to administer goods of Sarah Horsfield, proved at York, 17 July 1753.

<sup>24</sup> Margaret Smith, *Letters of Charlotte Brontë* (Oxford, 1985), I, pp. 427–29; cf. Tom Winniffrith, 'More on the Robinsons and their relations', *BST*, 25:1 (2000), p. 80.

<sup>25</sup> On the Robinsons of Newby see *DNB* and G. Hinchliffe, 'The Robinsons of Newby Park and Newby Hall', *YAJ*, 63 (1991), pp. 127–38; 64 (1992), pp. 185–202.

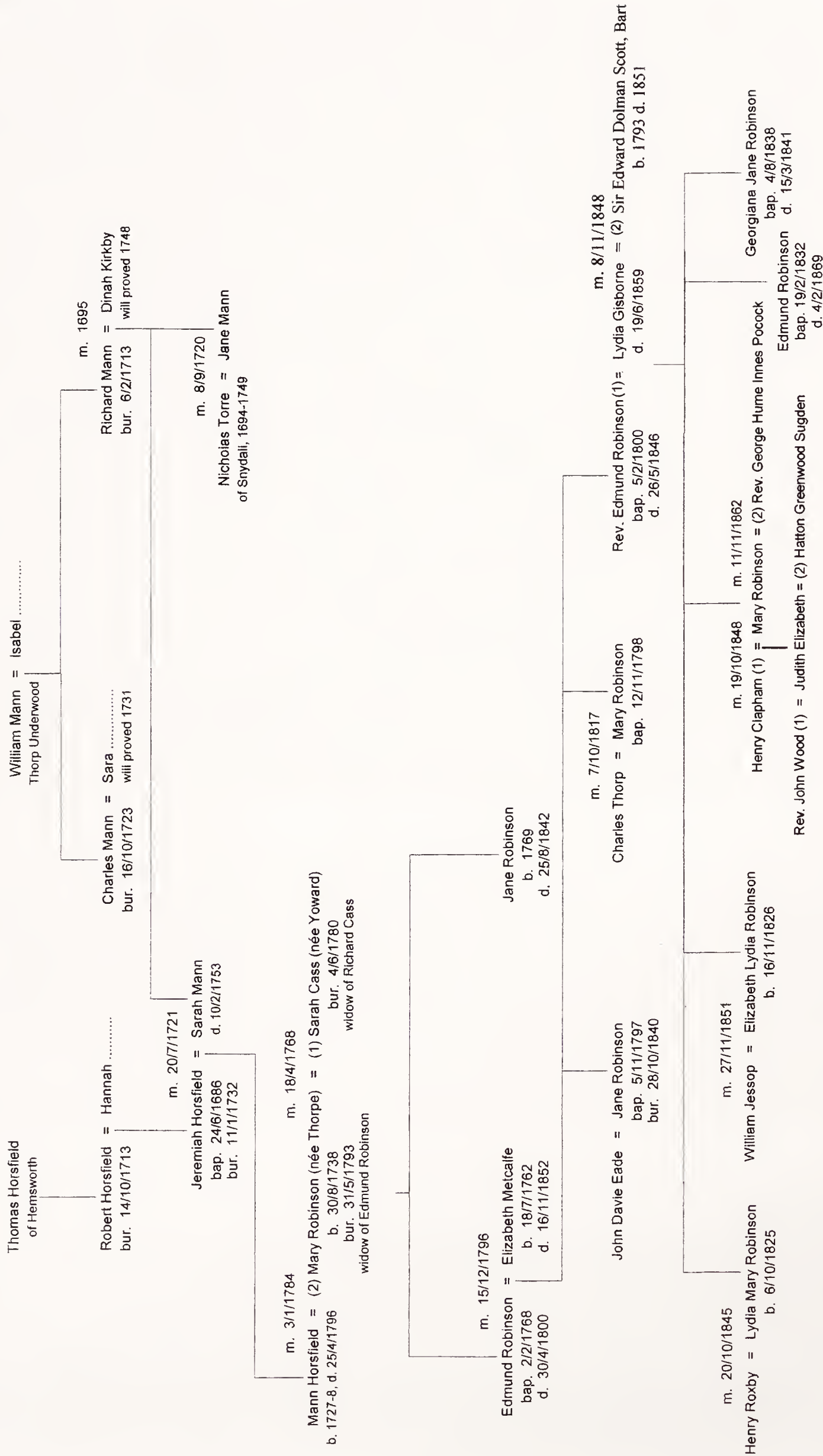


Fig. 1. Pedigree of the Robinson family of Thorp Green.



great-aunt, left five guineas to 'mistress Frances Robinson, my niece Usher's daughter'. But it needs to be stressed that it was a distant kinship.<sup>26</sup>

It is possible to be more definite, however, about Major Robinson. In 1756 he was commissioned as a lieutenant in the 25th Regiment of Foot.<sup>27</sup> Robinson's regiment played an active role in the Seven Years War as part of the large British army sent to protect Hanover from the French, which won the famous victory at Minden in 1759. By 1763 the War was won, and it is reasonable to say that Robinson was fortunate to have come through alive, and as the size of the army was scaled down he was lucky too not to be retired on half-pay. The regiment returned to England and Robinson was posted to Berwick-upon-Tweed.<sup>28</sup> It was at Berwick, nearly a year later (on 29 March 1764), that Edmund, now promoted captain, married Mary Thorp.<sup>29</sup> Obviously Robinson had no control over where his regiment was stationed, although he might perhaps have a say in how the colonel disposed his company. So the marriage looks like a romantic one, with the gallant war-hero winning the heart of the daughter of the local clergyman.

On 2 February 1768 at Dumfries, the Robinsons' son, Edmund, was baptised.<sup>30</sup> The regiment was working around Dumfries building the military road from Carlisle to Port Patrick. As soon as their son was christened, Captain Robinson, his family and the rest of the regiment marched south and embarked for Minorca. It was probably here that Mary bore another child, Jane. In June 1774, Robinson was promoted major but within a few weeks he was dead.<sup>31</sup> We can safely presume that Mary and her two children made their way back fairly soon to England. Her father having died, she went to live in Newcastle upon Tyne with or near her unmarried uncle, Robert Thorp, who was a 'fitter' or coal-merchant there. It seems likely that Mary was not at this point particularly wealthy — her husband's death would have meant the loss of any purchase money he had invested in his promotions. There is no record of Major Robinson having himself much in the way of landed or other property: he would hardly have stayed in the army so long if he had. It was therefore extremely fortunate that Mary Robinson was able on 3 January 1784 to marry the philanthropic Mann Horsfield and come to Thorp Green Hall.

#### EDMUND ROBINSON (1768–1800) AND ELIZABETH METCALFE (1762–1852)

Mary Horsfield, as she now was, enjoyed her prosperity only for nine years and died in 1793 at Harrogate, like the first Mrs Horsfield, and was also buried at Great Ouseburn. Then in 1796 Mann Horsfield himself died, and left the great bulk of his valuable estate to his two step-children, Edmund and Jane Robinson. He was careful in his will to leave an annuity of £300 to his cousin, and 'heir-at-law', Robert Horsfield, on condition that the latter renounced any claims to the leasehold portions of his estate. This clause confirms that Mann Horsfield's connection to the two children of Mary Robinson, to whom he left the rest of his estate, was by virtue of his marriage to their mother. Edmund and

<sup>26</sup> BI, Prerogative Court, York, will of Sara Mann, dated 1723, proved 1731; abstract in Mann Papers, Society of Genealogists.

<sup>27</sup> Army List 1757, 1760, 1765, 1770, 1772, 1773, 1774, 1775.

<sup>28</sup> Capt. R. T. Higgins, *The Records of the King's Own Borderers* (London, 1873), pp. viii, 86–147.

<sup>29</sup> Berwick Parish Register (microfilm at Library of SOG).

<sup>30</sup> Dumfries Parish Register (database of Scottish parish records, TNA:PRO).

<sup>31</sup> Higgins, *Records*; Rev. Percy Sumner, 'The 25th Foot in Menorca, 1771', *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research*, 19 (1940), pp. 19–33. Sumner's article contains photographs of six paintings, attributed to Giuseppe Chiesa, depicting of members of the regiment grouped in various ways and painted while on Minorca; the originals are now in the National Army Museum. Although Robinson is probably among them, he cannot be identified. My thanks are due to Cecilia Kendall of the Fine and Decorative Arts Department of the National Army Museum for this information.



Jane were to receive £3,000 each and a half share as 'tenants in common' in the landed estate. This was an old-fashioned will, of a sort probably quite normal in the Province of York, with no suggestion of primogeniture or patriarchy about it, and nothing fussy like an entail.<sup>32</sup> In addition to the estate at Thorp Green, Horsfield left a leasehold estate at Hutton Lowcross in Cleveland, held of the Crown, which he had acquired in 1776 from Ralph Yoward (brother of his first wife, and probably related to him in blood too). It had a head-rent of £537 p.a. in 1814, and was sold in 1842 on the death of Jane Robinson, who had taken it as her share.<sup>33</sup> This was the remnant of the Yoward estate in Cleveland which they had held since Tudor times. Horsfield's estate also included a new-built house in Peaseholmgreen, York, and other houses in the city which he had bought in 1782 from the Revd Richard Tillard of Wirksworth, Derbyshire; Tillard was married to Sarah, only child of Ralph Yoward.<sup>34</sup>

The marriage of Edmund Robinson was also arranged by Horsfield before he died although he did not live quite long enough to see it. Edmund married in 1796 at York Elizabeth Metcalfe, daughter of Richard Metcalfe (1737–1809), sheriff of York in 1787 and lord mayor in 1795. Richard was the son of Conyers Metcalfe (d. 1756), both tailors.<sup>35</sup> Horsfield had been associated with the Metcalfes for a number of years. He had witnessed the second marriage of Richard Metcalfe to Ann Stephenson, daughter of a lord mayor of York, in 1776, and when he made his will, Horsfield named Richard as one of his executors.<sup>36</sup> Edmund and Elizabeth lived at Thorp Green for less than five years, during which time they had three children (Edmund, Sarah and Jane), but in 1800 Edmund died, leaving his wife to bring up their infant family. Edmund's will stipulated that he should be buried without a hearse, but carried to his grave by his servants or labourers; this was presumably to avoid unnecessary expense, rather than as an act of ostentation. He left £2,000 to his sister, Jane, and all his property to his wife whom he made executrix. There was something a little unusual in this even in the Province of York, since it placed his children's prosperity entirely in the hands of the two women of the family, who were both still of marriageable age.<sup>37</sup> In the event, his trust in them was well-placed, since neither of them did marry.

#### THE REVD EDMUND ROBINSON (1800–46)

Born within a few weeks of his father's death in 1800, Edmund Robinson, the employer of the Brontës, was, to judge by her letters, doted on by his maiden aunt, Jane, and presumably by his mother, Elizabeth, a more shadowy figure. There are a good number of property transactions recorded in the Robinson Papers held in the Brontë Parsonage Museum, made in the years after Mann Horsfield's death which show that Aunt Jane

<sup>32</sup> BI, Prerogative Court, York, will of Mann Horsfield, proved 1796; NYRO, Great Ouseburn parish register, 31 May 1793 (burial of Mary Horsfield), 9 May 1796 (burial of Mann Horsfield); *Leeds Mercury*, 1 June 1793, 30 April 1796; *Extracts from the Leeds Intelligencer*, Thoresby Society (Leeds, 1956), p. 44.

<sup>33</sup> BPM, RP, S113 (3), S127–151; there were probably other properties there too, leased from the Archbishop of York.

<sup>34</sup> BPM, RP, S152

<sup>35</sup> *Register of the Freeman of the City of York*, II, ed. Francis Collins, Surtees Society, 102 (1900), pp. 255, 279.

<sup>36</sup> *Parish Register, St Martin, Coney Street, York*, ed. Robert Beilby Cook, Yorkshire Parish Register Society, 36 (1909), p. 194 (23 April 1776).

<sup>37</sup> BI, Prerogative Court, York, will of Edmund Robinson, proved 26 July 1800.



was actively building up the estate rather as Horsfield had.<sup>38</sup> Other records also show that it was she who purchased the Manor of Little Ouseburn from Thomas Thornton of Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, and late of Thornville Royal, Yorkshire, for £1,365 in 1808.<sup>39</sup> Some of this property was transferred to Edmund at the time of his marriage, and then further settlements were made over the years. By 1842, after Aunt Jane's death, he was in full possession of the whole estate (apart from what had been settled in the hands of trustees for his future children at his marriage) when he inherited what Jane still held and also took possession of his mother's property in return for giving her an annuity of £800 a year.<sup>40</sup> Edmund had gone to Balliol College, Oxford, in 1817: the bishop of Durham was Visitor of Balliol and the Thorps probably got him to support Edmund's application. His tutor at Balliol was Charles Atmore Ogilvie who, as a north-countryman, was probably known to the Thorps. He formed a close enough relationship with Edmund to be asked to act as trustee in the marriage settlement when Edmund married Lydia Gisborne. Ogilvie was an exceptional tutor, one of the leading lights in the rise of Balliol to its position of pre-eminence in Victorian Oxford. It is hardly surprising, with Ogilvie's influence and given his Thorp background, that Edmund Robinson should decide to become a clergyman.<sup>41</sup> Having taken his third-class degree (by no means a disgrace at that time), he was ordained deacon in 1823, and then appointed curate of Ryton and Winlaton in County Durham. Ryton was the living of his uncle, Charles Thorp, and Winlaton is close by; he cannot have held these positions, at least as a resident, for very long. On 29 August 1824 Robinson was made a priest. Whether he had in mind a permanent clerical career is unclear; after all, he had great expectations of achieving in the end a very comfortable income which would make working for a living unnecessary.<sup>42</sup>

Edmund needed, however, to get married. The correspondence between his aunt and her solicitor in York, John Ord, survives where it deals with the attempts in 1823 to arrange the marriage between Edmund and Eliza Thompson, the daughter of Richard John Thompson, the owner of Kirby Hall, only a mile or so from Thorp Green.<sup>43</sup> This was a delightful Palladian mansion, designed in the 1750s by Lord Burlington and Roger Morris, built by John Carr, but now demolished. The Thompsons were a rather grander family than the Robinsons, descended from a seventeenth-century member of parliament for York, and with their fortunes re-established by a London banker who had built the new hall.<sup>44</sup> They had nearly twice as much land as the Robinsons, which placed them, in Bateman's terms, outside the squirearchy and among the greater landed gentry.<sup>45</sup> Aunt Jane seems to have been in charge of the arrangements for the marriage, working with

<sup>38</sup>. BPM, RP, S54. In crude numerical terms, there are eighteen property transactions recorded 1769–91 (i.e. when Mann Horsfield was in charge); nineteen in the years 1801–24 (under Jane Robinson) and then only one until 1857 (under Revd Edmund Robinson, his trustees and his young son). This probably exaggerates Jane's role, since during her period the property needed to be transferred to her nephew from herself and her sister-in-law; there were also enclosures to deal with under herself and under Horsfield (North Yorkshire Record Office, Northallerton, enclosure papers for Little Ouseburn, 1806, and for Great Ouseburn, 1777).

<sup>39</sup>. West Yorkshire Archive Service, Leeds, Gray, Dodsworth and Cobb Papers, 145. These were the papers of the Thompson family who bought Thorp Green from the Robinsons. I used the typescript list of this collection and did not consult the originals. Cf. BPM, RP, S67–70.

<sup>40</sup>. BPM, RP, S21; BI, Prerogative Court, York, will of Jane Robinson, proved 7 Sept. 1842.

<sup>41</sup>. John H. Jones, 'Balliol: from obscurity to pre-eminence', in *The History of the University of Oxford*, ed. M. G. Brock & M. C. Curthoys (Oxford, 1987), vi, i, pp. 176–79.

<sup>42</sup>. Information on York clergy in card indexes at Borthwick Institute of Historical Research, York.

<sup>43</sup>. BPM, RP, S113.

<sup>44</sup>. Brian Wragg, *The Life and Works of John Carr of York* ed. Giles Worsley (York, 2000), pp. 7–8, 165–66; Edward Waterson & Peter Meadows, *Lost Houses of the West Riding* (York, 1998), p. 15.

<sup>45</sup>. Bateman, *Great Landowners*, p. 438.



her cousin, the Revd Charles Thorp, who in 1817 had married Edmund's sister, Mary. As Jane told Ord: Mr Thorp says 'we old folks must fight out these money concerns' and keep them away from the couple-to-be. On the morning of 5 May 1823, Mr Thompson came to visit Jane Robinson at Thorp Green. She described him as 'nervous and not good at business, but as far as I can understand is satisfied with the whole, but is puzzled to know how the money in the Funds which cannot be had till his death can be secured, but would I think be willing to make it over to Trustees or give a Bond for it'. She told Ord to draw up a settlement and send it to Thompson, who had gone to stay in London with his brother-in-law, Sir Thomas Plumer, who was Master of the Rolls: 'do pray let your copy be a good one as he [Plumer] is sure to see it'. The negotiations carried on for the next three months; essentially the two sides could not agree the size of their contributions. Jane seems to have been keen on the marriage, but she was reluctant to give too much money away, and deprive herself and her sister-in-law, Elizabeth:

Certainly the Farm House [presumably Thorp Green Hall] and Land at Thorp Green is much above £1,000 a year besides all Linen, china, furniture, farming stock and crops. You are aware if they [the couple-to-be] get over £500 a year and the income of the whole of Miss Thompson's fortune settled they get £850 a year jointure which is a £150 more than I intended or our property ought to grant.

Thompson began to haggle and to propose changes. Jane told her solicitor what she thought Thompson was angling for: 'I fancy it is for Miss Thompson to receive the interest of the £7,000 settled by Edmund upon children, if this was not intended originally by us. I certainly will object to that as it might make her income with one child above £1,000 a year, which would be more than Mrs Robinson and I should have.' To judge by Jane's letters, Edmund was attracted to Eliza: 'they [the Thompsons] cannot doubt Mr Robinson's both inclination and humour to will everything in his power'; 'my nephew appears equally determined not to let the money return, but where a gentleman is much attached there is no saying how he may be prevailed upon against his better judgement'. This may have been simply what a gentleman was supposed to feel. When the negotiations began to come unstuck, Edmund fell ill. 'My nephew is in such decidedly bad health'; 'my nephew is now seriously out of health'; 'Dr Murray has ordered Mr Robinson to try sea air'. They went to Redcar, and Jane wrote, 'I am happy to inform you Mr Robinson I hope is daily gaining both health and strength by sea air and warm bathing'. The engagement was now definitely off: 'I am not sorry to say that the match with Miss Thompson is utterly at an end. They have behaved shamefully but this you must not name to anyone or indeed appear to know anything about it'. In September Edmund travelled to France to complete his recuperation. Eliza Thompson married in 1828 the Revd T. Hutton Croft, vicar of Hutton Buscel and Stillington, Yorkshire, whose family were presumably easier to negotiate with than the Robinsons.<sup>46</sup>

#### LYDIA GISBORNE (1799–1859) AND THE REVD EDMUND ROBINSON (1800–46)

A year later, in 1824, Edmund also got married, to Lydia Gisborne. Like the Manns and Horsfields the Gisbornes had made their money in an urban environment, in this case Derby.<sup>47</sup> They had come to the town from Hartington, and had established themselves as one of Derby's leading families by the mid-seventeenth century. In 1704, when John

<sup>46</sup>. J. A. Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigiensis (to 1900)* (Cambridge 1944), s.v. Croft.

<sup>47</sup>. Pedigrees of Gisborne, in Stephen Glover, *History and Gazetteer of the County of Derby* (Derby, 1833), II, i, pp. 216–17, 359.



Gisborne of Derby died, he was a wealthy man, and left to his son, Thomas, the businesses he carried on in the 'sopehouse, tallowhouse, warehouse and oylehouse near or adjoining to the house wherein I dwell', in addition to the 'soap pans and the great scale and weights' which were part of his stock in trade.<sup>48</sup> John Gisborne (d. 1779), Thomas's son and Lydia's grandfather, had made the move from Derby and from Trade to Yoxall Lodge, just over the border in Staffordshire, having achieved a grant of arms in 1742. There were already by then Anglican clergymen in the family, and Thomas Gisborne, Lydia's father, after St John's College, Cambridge followed them into the church. He was an extremely well-known Evangelical, one of the 'Clapham Sect', friend of Simeon and Wilberforce, with a clerical reputation to rival that of Charles Thorp.<sup>49</sup> Thomas Gisborne, like his brother John, whose work was commended by Wordsworth, was also a poet and in addition a most accomplished naturalist and collector of specimens. He was a flautist and a painter, a friend of Joseph Wright of Derby who taught him to paint, would visit him at Yoxall, and accompanied him on a holiday to the Lakes.<sup>50</sup>

It was probably by the Thorps that the marriage between Edmund and Lydia was arranged: the Revd James Gisborne (d. 1759) had been a prebendary of Durham, and Lydia's father enjoyed the same distinction. It is possible that Ogilvie (Edmund's tutor) may have had a hand in it too since he was probably known to Gisborne. After the marriage, the Revd Thomas Gisborne found it convenient to stay at Thorp Green on his journey from Yoxall to Durham when he needed to perform his duties there. He supported Charles Thorp in his moves to set up the University of Durham, and after his death left his zoological collection to the museum there, including the stuffed great auk he bought in about 1830 for £5 from Mr Reed of Doncaster, perhaps while on a visit to his daughter.<sup>51</sup>

Jane Robinson had a rather low opinion of the Gisbornes. When Lydia's father failed to pay the legal costs incurred in arranging the marriage settlement she wrote to her solicitor, Ord: 'I think Messrs Budge's and Mason's Bill immense and that in common honesty these wondrous pious canting old Gisbornes should have paid the money, but this is strictly confidential'. The marriage was solemnized in December 1824, and the following year there was a honeymoon in Italy. They left in February accompanied by Edmund's unmarried sister Jane. Aunt Jane wrote to Ord: 'My niece Jane goes to Italy with Mr and Mrs Robinson which makes us busy and feel a little flat'. By April, Aunt Jane was writing from Ryton Rectory, home of the Thorps, again to Ord:

I have this morning received excellent accounts from our travellers who are safe and well at Rome, but I am sorry to say money goes so fast, my nephew seems near an end of what he took with him and wishes to have £200 immediately remitted to him, at least to Hammersley the Banker

<sup>48</sup>. PRO, Prerogative Court, Canterbury, will of John Gisborne, proved 31 May 1704.

<sup>49</sup>. DNB, s.v. Gisborne; *A Derbyshire Armoury*, ed. Maxwell Craven, Derbyshire Record Society, 17 (1991), p. 70; J. Stephen, *Essays in Ecclesiastical Biography*, 3rd edn, (London, 1853), II, pp. 301–09; John H. Overton, *The English Church in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1894), pp. 74–76, 147, 174–76, 201; M. Craven, *Derby: an Illustrated History* (Derby, 1996), pp. 55, 78, 82, 91–92, 132; Gladwyn Turbutt, *A History of Derbyshire* (Cardiff, 1999), III, pp. 1225, 1276, 1306, 1312, 1340, 1611, 1624, & vol. IV, pp. 1474, 1514, 1584; M. Craven, *Derbeians of Distinction* (Derby, 1998), pp. 99–101.

<sup>50</sup>. E. S. Edees, 'The Early History of Field Botany in Staffordshire 1597–1839', *Transactions of the North Staffordshire Field Club*, 82 (1947–48), pp. 100–07; Charles Cardale Babington, *Memorials, Journals and Botanical Correspondence* (Cambridge, 1897), p. 231; Benedict Nicolson, *Joseph Wright of Derby* (New York, 1968), I, pp. 133–37, & vol. II, plates 191, 269; Nicolson, 'Thomas Gisborne and Wright of Derby', *Burlington Magazine*, Feb. 1965, pp. 58–62.

<sup>51</sup>. Whiting, *University of Durham*, pp. 35, 77, 286. A letter from Gisborne to Thorp is in *The Diaries and Correspondence of James Losh*, ed. Edward Hughes, Surtees Society, 174 (1963), pp. 198–99; a further letter in *Thorp Correspondence*, ed. Elizabeth Rainey, (n.p., 1998), p. 167 (this collection relates entirely to Thorp's professional duties).



in Pall Mall, London. . . . as I really have not that sum, I will consider it a very great favour if Wilson's Bank will accomodate [*sic*] me with it. I will repay them on the rent day at latest. Will you get the two hundred sent to Hammersley immediately and mind be clear for whose use it is, and as the name is a common one, perhaps it would be well to say who Mr Robinson married as they are the Gisbornes' friends as well as bankers.<sup>52</sup>

The newly-weds had to have somewhere to live, and at first the intention was for them not to have stayed at Thorp Green, leaving it to old Mrs Robinson and Aunt Jane, but in 1827 the two ladies bought a house in Castlegate, York, and the following year had taken a lease on Hammerton Hall, a few miles away from Thorp Green.<sup>53</sup> Lydia and Edmund had one son, Edmund (bap. 1832), and four daughters, the last of whom died as an infant: Lydia Mary (b. 1825), Elizabeth Lydia (b. 1826), Mary (b. 1828), Georgiana (b. 1838). It is possible to say a little about life at Thorp Green. The family was musical and the Robinson Papers record the purchase of a 'Grand Piano Forte'; two letters from Aunt Jane survive fussing about obtaining tickets for concerts in the Minster, which she claimed she should have some priorities in getting since Edmund was 'a patron', presumably of some music society or festival.<sup>54</sup> There were holidays in Bath, Scarborough, Redcar and Harrogate; and obviously family visits to the Thorps, Gisbornes, and their relations. Edmund was a shooting man; the inventory made in 1848 records that the house contained three guns and six pistols as well as two swords; in the library among the works of Gisborne and Simeon was *Ranby on gunshot wounds*.<sup>55</sup> In 1844 Edmund arranged to exchange shooting-rights with his Thompson neighbour. Shooting seems to have been popular in the area, and later on, in 1861, after the estate had been let by Edmund's son, the shooting rights were sold to Thompson for £60 a year.<sup>56</sup> It is sometimes suggested that Edmund had little to do at Thorp Green, and did not practise his profession as a clergyman. But although he lived in Little Ouseburn, which was where the family attended church, he was for a period the curate of Great Ouseburn. Still, perhaps too much should not be made of this since he himself had an assistant curate at Great Ouseburn. Robinson is to be found signing the parish register at Great Ouseburn on only four occasions (two of those before he was curate there), but perhaps he let others take the fees at christenings, marriages and burials. He also officiated at one baptism at Little Ouseburn, apart from baptising his own children privately and then having their baptisms registered there.<sup>57</sup> Robinson was lay impropriator of the tithes at Great Ouseburn. He was also in dispute with the Vicar of Little Ouseburn over tithes, since the township of Thorp Underwood claimed exemption.<sup>58</sup> This was a long running problem which had erupted in 1826, when Aunt Jane seemed still to be largely in control of affairs. Edmund wrote to her from Bath that Domesday Book should be searched for evidence of an ancient right to avoid tithes in the village because it had once been monastic property. He continued excitedly, 'I have just now . . . asked a man to examine it, and hope to know his discoveries before the post goes out today.' Later in the letter he reported the return of his researcher: 'the result of my enquiry is that Domesday Book was compiled in the year one thousand and something, and the abbey was founded eleven hundred and something so that it is clear no light can be thrown upon the subject

<sup>52</sup>. BPM, RP, S115.

<sup>53</sup>. BPM, RP, S116, 117, 118. I am not clear whether this is Green Hammerton or Kirk Hammerton; both are near Thorp Green and both have had Halls.

<sup>54</sup>. BPM, RP, S113, 115.

<sup>55</sup>. BPM, RP, S93/7.

<sup>56</sup>. BPM, RP, S85.

<sup>57</sup>. *Clergy List*, 1841, 1842, 1844, 1845; parish registers (North Yorkshire Record Office, Northallerton).

<sup>58</sup>. BPM, RP, S66.



from this quarter'. It was perhaps sensible that he left such matters to his aunt. When the issue arose again in 1843, Robinson was also wise in asking his solicitor, Henry Newton, to attend on his behalf the public meeting which was being held into the matter. But although Robinson relied on expert legal advice and one can imagine that Aunt Jane's counsel was also sought while she lived, running an estate of 2000 acres can hardly have been a sinecure, even if he was not the most active of landowners.

There were also social responsibilities to be fulfilled as a leading inhabitant of the village. George Whitehead, the rustic chronicler of events in Little Ouseburn, writes with great respect of the Robinsons. The Robinson papers show Jane writing in 1825 to her solicitor concerned to help the orphan son of a tenant, 'who left this young man to my care'; 'he has been regularly educated for a farmer with a person of some eminence in the County of Durham, and though perhaps rather too young to establish himself, is so remarkably prudent in every respect and careful that I could trust and recommend him as Tenant to any person; he has £1,000 of his own.'<sup>59</sup> A letter of Lydia's from 1848, after her husband's death, shows that he had been paying to have a boy, presumably son of a poor villager, educated at Great Ouseburn Boys School at his own expense.<sup>60</sup> When Revd Edmund Robinson was buried, Whitehead records that a group of sixty Oddfellows followed the coffin to the grave, and this suggests that Edmund was an active supporter of this friendly society, which placed him at odds with other clergymen, some of whom condemned such self-help institutions as potentially atheistical. His brother-in-law (and cousin) Charles Thorp had published a sermon in 1841 against the Oddfellows on the grounds, ironically, that they used Deist prayers at the funerals of their members.<sup>61</sup> Robinson was a Tory, and can be seen voting for his party in the Poll Books. Most people in the vicinity of Thorp Green voted Tory, but this was probably from inclination rather than from a desire to please the Robinsons, especially when we consider that Thompson, who owned more land in the area, was a Whig. In voting Tory, Robinson differed from his wife, whose brother was a Whig MP, but agreed with the Brontës.<sup>62</sup>

## THE DEATH OF REVD EDMUND ROBINSON AND REMARRIAGE OF LYDIA

Problems began to crowd in on Lydia, Edmund and their family in the 1840s. Edmund's sister, Jane, who had rather late in life married a clergyman from Durham, John Davie Eade, died in 1840 at the age of 42 and was buried at Little Ouseburn. The youngest daughter, Georgiana, died in 1841. The following year Aunt Jane died. In the summer of 1845, Anne and Branwell Brontë left their employment. Whatever the reason for this, it must have been a difficult time. Late in 1845, their eldest daughter, Lydia Mary, eloped (see below). Early in 1846 Lydia's father, Thomas Gisborne, died. Whether all this contributed to the deterioration in health of Revd Edmund cannot of course be gauged, but it is known that on 26 May 1846 he died. His will contrasts very strongly with that of his own father and that of the family's benefactor, Mann Horsfield, for it is a will based on notions of patriarchy: Edmund wished to leave the valuable estate at Thorp Green essentially to his son, although he was generous in the provision he made for his widow during her widowhood. Perhaps he remembered how he had grown up with the property entirely in the hands of his mother and his aunt (due to the wills of his father and step-grandfather); perhaps he was influenced by his wife's notions of how property

<sup>59</sup>. BPM, RP, S115.

<sup>60</sup>. BPM, RP, S92/8(18).

<sup>61</sup>. *George Whitehead's Journal*, p. 20n; P. H. J. H. Gosden, *The Friendly Societies in England 1815-75* (Manchester, 1961), pp. 167-69.

<sup>62</sup>. *Poll Books, West Riding of Yorkshire*, 1835, 1837, 1841.



should be divided; perhaps inheritance customs in the North had changed. He disfranchised one daughter entirely, although that is probably a side-issue, the result of her elopement; the other two daughters were left with half his wife's dowry (£6,000) when she should die, and £1,000 each out of what his mother and aunt had settled on him at his marriage, while his son received £4,000 of that. This sort of testamentary settlement did not exactly improve the marriage chances of his daughters. The one thing that Edmund Robinson's will did not do (contrary to what Branwell Brontë claimed) was to disinherit his wife; in fact the will was unusually generous towards her. She was to have the entire income from his estate until she died or remarried. This was a far more favourable settlement on a widow than was common at the time. She was also made sole guardian of the children, a trustee, and co-executor. The other trustees were Henry Newton, lawyer of York, and Charles Thorp, but the will laid down that 'during her [Lydia's] widowhood every other trustee acting under this my will shall attend to her wishes and directions in the management of my estate and the execution of the trusts reposed in them'. This was also an unusual provision to make and disposes of the notion that Lydia was ever in a legal dispute with her co-trustees, an idea which is based in any case on a misunderstanding of one of her letters. From the will, which it is worth emphasising was made subsequent to Branwell's dismissal, there is nothing to suggest that Edmund was not a trusting and loving husband.<sup>63</sup>

Lydia seems to have behaved a little erratically after Edmund's death, and reading the few letters of hers which survive from this period the impression one gains is of someone who lacked the structure in her life she needed for emotional stability. Perhaps she was always like this, or perhaps this is a mistaken impression; there are not many letters to go on. In March 1847 Lydia moved away from Thorp Green, and it was advertised to be let. The Robinsons were never again to live in the house, although Lydia says in a letter: 'I hope that Thorp Green is inhabited, it will keep it dry and nice in every way, as I often feel anxious to keep it very perfect in repair. . . against it is again needed by [us *crossed out*] me.' It was initially let furnished, which supports the idea that this was just a temporary arrangement. Lydia went back to her home territory, perhaps not unreasonably since she had some responsibilities towards her widowed mother. She also went to help care for her sickly cousin, Lady Catherine Scott, with whom she stayed at Great Barr, Staffordshire. She seems to have looked upon this as a chore, which she clearly saw was preventing her from discharging her maternal duties, writing from Great Barr: 'I am very anxious about my son and I am greatly mortified at the illness of Lady Scott which has changed all our holiday plans'.<sup>64</sup> The family was now to some degree dispersed: Lydia stayed largely at Great Barr, Edmund was off at his school in Somerset, one girl had eloped, and the other two lived largely in York where their grandmother also lived, and where they presumably had friends and relations. Lydia was not short of money at this point. It was however necessary to sell some of the timber on the estate, which raised £800, to pay off Edmund's debts but this was all part of the financial ups-and-downs of an estate which had to keep a young family.<sup>65</sup> Lydia's own father had not left her very much (she had one eighth of the residuary estate of £2,000), but she had plenty as long as she stayed a widow.<sup>66</sup> The main financial problem she had was her

<sup>63</sup> BI, Prerogative Court, York, will of Revd Edmund Robinson, proved 11 Sept. 1846.

<sup>64</sup> BPM, RP, S92/8(8); on Great Barr, see Tim Cockin, *The Staffordshire Encyclopaedia* (Stoke-on-Trent, 2000), p. 289.

<sup>65</sup> BPM, RP, S94/4.

<sup>66</sup> BPM, RP, S126(1); TNA: PRO, will of Rev. Thomas Gisborne, Prerogative Court, Canterbury, proved 23 April 1846.



daughters, and this may support the notion that she wanted to marry them off quickly. She wrote in April 1848 from Great Barr:

I think I could engraft a little more economy into my children and I hope may do so, as I am constantly inculcating its necessity and my girls have £70 each allowance besides many payments from me. However, I hope we shall improve.<sup>67</sup>

Lady Scott died in August 1848 and within a very short time, on 8 November 1848, her widower, Sir Edward Dolman Scott, and Lydia were married. Although this marriage has been attacked by Lydia's critics, from one perspective it was altruistic since it meant that her son could, when he was of age, claim full possession of the Thorp Green estate. Lydia could now go off on another foreign honeymoon. Sir Edward even took a yacht which was fitted out at Southampton and sent round to the Mediterranean to meet them. Then she could live at Great Barr, and also in Sir Edward's house in Mayfair. Although her new husband was not much older than she, he died shortly after their marriage, in December 1851. Lydia herself died in 1859. In her will, she left various pieces of jewellery to her children (including the one who had eloped) and also laid down what she wished to be done with her body: 'I wish to be buried at Thorp Green if not inconvenient to my son to do so', presumably she meant by this to be buried by her first husband Edmund in Little Ouseburn churchyard. In the event she never was.<sup>68</sup>

## THE MARRIAGES OF THE DAUGHTERS OF EDMUND AND LYDIA ROBINSON

It has been suggested that the marriages of the three daughters of Lydia and Edmund Robinson who survived into adulthood furnish us with keys to the character of Lydia, and there may be some truth in this. The first of these marriages also provides a strong insight into Edmund's character, but the other two daughters married after his death. The suggestion has been made that Lydia wished to marry her daughters off quickly after her husband's death so that she could be free of the responsibility of looking after them, and also so that she could herself remarry. Another analysis offered is that the public knowledge of Lydia's affair with Branwell Brontë made the girls unmarriageable to respectable men and hence forced them to marry beneath themselves.<sup>69</sup> There is a little to support either view in the famous letters of Charlotte Brontë to Ellen Nussey; there may be some truth in the first notion but there is not much at all to commend the second.

## LYDIA MARY AND HENRY ROXBY

The first Robinson marriage is uncontentious enough, if highly romantic. On 20 October 1845 Lydia Mary, the eldest daughter, eloped with Henry Roxby and was married at Gretna Green that very night. She had only just turned twenty. Roxby was an actor from Scarborough where the Robinsons often went on holiday. As George Whitehead says in his *Journal*, 'a bad job . . . poor lass'.<sup>70</sup> Since she was only twenty, the elopement to Gretna was, as is well known, a way to marry without the consent of her parents. Presumably Roxby was not very rich, and also thought to be in a disreputable profession. His relatives are a little difficult to disentangle partly because they called themselves both Roxby and Beverley. Starting with an actor who had been a midshipman in Nelson's

<sup>67</sup>. BPM, RP, 92/8(8).

<sup>68</sup>. BPM, RP, 92/8(18); Central Probate Registry, will of Dame Lydia Scott, proved London 4 July 1859.

<sup>69</sup>. Barker, *The Brontës*, pp. 460–61, 573–74; Tom Winnifrith, 'Mrs Robinson and her cousins', *BST*, 24:2 (1999), p. 189; but see Winnifrith, 'More on the Robinsons and their relations', *BST*, 25:1 (2000), 79–84.

<sup>70</sup>. *George Whitehead's Journal*, pp. 16k, 407b.



navy, they played a significant part in the history of the London and Northern stage in the early and mid-nineteenth century, as actors, managers and scene artists.<sup>71</sup> The elopement may possibly suggest that there had been some upheavals in the Robinson home in the years before, but it does not support the view that because of a stain on the family name the girls were forced into marrying below themselves. This was clearly a love-match, and one of which the head of the family strongly disapproved. Within just over a month the couple had come to Thorp Green on a public visit, and hence been accepted back into the family circle; Whitehead comments laconically, 'All Right'.<sup>72</sup> But all was not forgiven and forgotten, since Robinson changed his will on 2 January 1846 and cut Lydia Mary out of it. This act hardly reflects well on Edmund, but it may be that had he lived longer he would have repented and changed the will back. The rest of the family restored Lydia Mary to their affections very quickly; she was soon staying with her sister Mary after the latter had married. When, over twenty years later, her brother Edmund died unexpectedly he divided his property (which was worth somewhat under £100,000) more or less equally among his three sisters and so Lydia got her inheritance in the end. She lived first in Hull and then in Manchester and Liverpool, presumably following her husband in his acting career from theatre to theatre. The address she gave in Hull (6, Humber Street) where one of her sons was born was clearly from the 1851 census a lodging house, which suggests that they were going through hard times at that point. The couple had two sons, both of whom had Edmund as one of their forenames.<sup>73</sup>

#### ELIZABETH LYDIA, WILLIAM MILNER AND WILLIAM JESSOP

The second daughter, Elizabeth Lydia or Bessy, also had some difficulties in her marriage arrangements, at least at first. In December 1848 William Milner of Grove House, Harrogate, published notices in the *York Herald* and *Birmingham Journal* in which he announced that he was about to give a full account of his five-year association with Elizabeth, together with their correspondence.<sup>74</sup> He was going to do this, he said, to free himself from the accusation that he had not acted properly and had been responsible for breaking off the engagement. This set the family lawyers to work, and one travelled to Kent to see the Vice-Chancellor and obtain an injunction stopping Milner from printing the letters. Lydia and the Thorps agreed that it was important to avoid a Chancery case and the matter was patched up somehow. Lydia was as indulgent as ever, writing to the solicitor from Great Barr: 'Bessy means no harm and I have written strongly to her.' (She added, rather pathetically, 'Mary is a good girl and my boy very kind to me'). Milner was 28, and Bessy 21; he was the son of Nathaniel and Catherine Milner and was described on the 1851 census, when he lived in Harrogate with his widowed mother and numerous younger sisters, as a landed proprietor. The Milner family had moved around the York district over the last thirty years, and had for a time lived in Little

<sup>71</sup> *DNB*, s.v. Roxby and Beverley; *Burke's Landed Gentry* [BLG], 1858, s.v. Roxby; *The Era Almanack*, 1882; R. J. Broadbent, *Annals of the Liverpool Stage* (Liverpool, 1908), pp. 145, 159, 160, 189, 192, 199; H. Barton Baker, *The London Stage* (London, 1889), ii, pp. 105–06; Baker, *Our Old Actors* (London, 1878), II, p. 222; Donald Ray, 'The Theatre Royal Hull or The Vanishing Circuit', in *Nineteenth Century British Theatre*, ed. K. Richards & P. Thomson (London, 1971), p. 29.

<sup>72</sup> *George Whitehead's Journal*, p. 17c.

<sup>73</sup> BI, Prerogative Court, York, Revd Edmund Robinson's will, proved 11 Sept. 1846. Names of Roxby children and addresses given in will of Edmund Robinson proved at York, 13 Mar. 1869; receipts of monies paid by trustees to Mrs Roxby show addresses, see BPM, RP S100; 1851 Census.

<sup>74</sup> *York Herald*, 16/12/1848; BPM, RP S92.



Ouseburn.<sup>75</sup> There is no indication that Milner objected to marrying Bessy because of the alleged liaison between Lydia and Branwell. Quite the reverse, since Bessy had broken off the engagement. It seems likely that Bessy, who had been his sweetheart since she was sixteen, simply met someone else she preferred while staying with her mother at Great Barr. On 27 November 1851 she married William Jessop of Butterley Hall in Derbyshire. He came from a wealthy industrial family. His grand-father was 'the first engineer of the kingdom', a self-made man who not only built canals, but also made solid investments in coal and iron, leaving his family well provided for financially.<sup>76</sup> There was a marriage settlement drawn up before the marriage, with Charles Thorp as one of the trustees, in addition to two of the Evanses, close relations of Lydia. This marriage possibly suggests a rather belated intervention by Lydia Robinson in the welfare of her children, or is simply, as has been said, the result of Bessy making a good choice herself. It certainly does not support either theory advanced above about these marriages.

### MARY, HENRY CLAPHAM AND THE REVD GEORGE HUME INNES POCOCK

The youngest daughter, Mary, married Henry Clapham at the age of twenty on 19 October 1848; he was the same age. This marriage was commented on most by Charlotte Brontë in her letters to Ellen Nussey, since it brought Mary to live at Aireworth, a house just the other side of Keighley from Haworth. The result was that Mary and her unmarried sister, Elizabeth, came to visit Anne, their former governess, at Haworth Parsonage. The Robinson girls were by now in quite regular correspondence with Anne Brontë. Shortly after the marriage (23 November 1848), Charlotte wrote to Ellen: 'Miss Mary is just married to Mr Henry Clapham, a relation of the Sugdens — a low match for her — she feels it so — and she does not, in writing to Anne, even pretend to be happy'. Later (10 December 1848), Charlotte repeated: 'They say Mr Clapham deceived them with his accounts of his fortune, establishment, connections etc. I do not expect the pair will ever be particularly happy'.<sup>77</sup>

Charlotte's comments are not really borne out by the facts. Before the marriage, a deed of settlement was drawn up endowing Mary with the money she was due under the original marriage settlement of her parents and under her father's will; a lawyer travelled from York to Aireworth House in Keighley to secure the agreement of Henry Clapham's father. This makes it clear that the marriage was one which was carefully prepared; since she was under 21, Mary needed the approval of her mother and the other trustees.<sup>78</sup> Henry Clapham's father, Samuel Blakey Clapham, was a worsted manufacturer with a large mill in Keighley; Henry was his only child and his wife was dead, hence Henry stood to inherit all his property. In fact Henry died before his father, so the property passed to Judith Elizabeth, Henry and Mary's only child; when Samuel Blakey Clapham died his estate was valued at about £20,000. This was perhaps less than might have been expected from a mill-owner. Between 1850 and 1857, Clapham borrowed £6,200 from his relatives, Lodge Calvert and Blakey Calvert, and he had to mortgage some of his property with them as a result. This indebtedness coincides quite

<sup>75</sup> BPM, RP, S92/8(4); *Post Office Directory, Yorkshire*, 1857, which shows William Nathaniel Milner (presumably Bessy's jilted lover) as one of the principal proprietors of Nun Monkton, a village a few miles from Thorp Green. Rebecca Fraser, 'Mrs Robinson and Branwell Brontë: some mistaken evidence', *BST*, 19:1 (1986), pp. 29–31; I take the letter, carefully reinterpreted in this important short article, to date from 1849 not 1848 and the reference to Chancery to apply to the Milner case.

<sup>76</sup> *The Butterley Company 1795–1830*, ed. Philip Riden, Derby Record Society, 17 (1990), esp. chap. 1; Charles Hadfield and A. W. Skempton, *William Jessop, Engineer* (London, 1979).

<sup>77</sup> Margaret Smith, *Letters of Charlotte Brontë* (Oxford, 2000), II, pp. 92–93, 104–05, 145–46, 153.

<sup>78</sup> BPM, RP, S23, S24, S92.



neatly with his son's marriage, and the need to support his son, daughter-in-law and soon his grand-daughter, a responsibility which continued until 1862 and which might in his declining years have made some inroads into his fortune. S. B. Clapham was related to a large number of the millocracy of the area, and most of them seemed to do better out of trade than he did; his nephew, William Rouse of Bradford, left £140,000 in 1869; Swithin Anderton of Bradford, his first cousin, left £80,000 in 1860; and Samuel Blakey Anderton, his first cousin once removed, also of Bradford, left £90,000 in 1874.<sup>79</sup> Still, Henry Clapham brought more money to the marriage than his wife. Henry's mother was a Greenwood, of the family who dominated trade in Haworth, and the families were related in other ways too; through them he was related to the Sugdens (as Charlotte said), another mill-owning family in the area.<sup>80</sup> Samuel Blakey Clapham was a respected figure in the community and a pious churchman. When he died in 1868 his obituary in the *Keighley News* records:

Mr Clapham was a native of Keighley, and he never lived away from the town. He was a type of a class now fast passing away and of which, at any rate in this district, there are but two or three examples left. Mr Clapham was a man of the kindest disposition, of no great force of character, but of whom it can probably be said that he has died without leaving an enemy. He was not a man to leave the impress of his mind on those around him, but he would have burnt his right hand in the fire rather than have committed any act having the least semblance of a doubtful character. The estimation in which he was held by his fellow-townsmen was evinced by the respect shown his memory at the funeral. Although Mr Clapham was in no sense a public man and never we believe held any public office in the town, magisterial or otherwise, a very general desire was manifested to attend the last rites upon his remains. The weather on the day of interment was deplorably wet, but nevertheless a large number of persons, including many prominent and influential inhabitants, joined the funeral cortege, and walked in procession from Aireworth House to the parish church . . . Thus the last tribute of honour and respect was paid to a man who through a long life had won and kept the esteem of all who knew him.<sup>81</sup>

The family were probably distantly related to the Claphams who married the Nusseys; they were certainly related, through the Greenwoods, to the Sidgwicks for whom Charlotte Brontë had acted as a governess.<sup>82</sup> At Great Ouseburn, the most famous clergyman in the early years of the century, from 1797–1830, whose name would have been known to Lydia, was one Samuel Clapham, a cousin of the family, and a noted cleric with a reputation almost as considerable as that of the Thorps and Gisbornes.<sup>83</sup> As for establishment, the 1851 census records the following living-in servants at Aireworth: butler, cook, nurse, and housemaid. The 1861 census has: cook, two lady's maids, two housemaids and a 'chairwoman'. They certainly could afford a substantial carriage, since

<sup>79</sup> CPR, will of S. B. Clapham, proved Wakefield, 4 Jan. 1869; TNA:PRO, IR 26/2589/77688 (estate duty records); CPR, will of W. Rouse, proved Wakefield, 16 Feb. 1869; will of S. Anderton, proved Wakefield, 24 May 1860; will of S. B. Anderton, proved Wakefield, 20 June 1874; J. Hodgson, *Textile manufacture in Keighley* (1879, reprint, Stamford, 1999), pp. 20–23, illustration no. 16 (Hodgson comments on the relative poverty of Clapham); P. J. Holmes, 'Eight Generations of a Yeoman family', *YAJ*, 72 (2000), pp. 131–52; West Yorkshire Archive Service (WYAS), Keighley Reference Library [KRL], MS BK 369 (papers relating to Aireworth Mill).

<sup>80</sup> There is a picture of Martha Greenwood, *née* Clapham, in Robert Barnard, *Emily Brontë* (London, 2000), p. 68; she was S. B. Clapham's aunt, and apparently admonished the Brontë girls to be respectful to their own aunt when they were taking tea with her at Bridge House, Haworth.

<sup>81</sup> *Keighley News*, 19 Dec. 1868.

<sup>82</sup> Sarah Fermi and Robin Greenwood, 'Jane Eyre and the Greenwood Family', *BST*, 22 (1997), pp. 44–53; Sarah Fermi, 'A Religious family disgraced', *BST*, 20:5 (1992), pp. 288–95; Barbara Clapham, *The Clapham Family* (London, 1993), pp. 36–39. It will be clear to anyone who knows his work, that I am particularly indebted to the researches of Robin Greenwood at this point; my thanks are also due to Barbara Clapham for information over and above what is contained in her book.

<sup>83</sup> J. A. Clapham, 'Some Claphams of note', *Bradford Antiquary*, n. s. III (1912), pp. 222–23; Harry Speight, *Chronicles and Stories of Old Bingley* (London, 1898), pp. 331–32.



Charlotte Brontë was concerned when they suggested a visit to the Parsonage that it would not be able to negotiate the narrow, hilly streets of Haworth. Charlotte herself also suggests that moving to Keighley did not cramp Mary's style too much: 'The new Mrs Clapham is said to be cutting a prodigious dash. She infuriates the Keighley gentry with her pride and assumption of superiority.'<sup>84</sup> Aireworth House was demolished in about 1920, but from an old photograph it appears to have been a comfortable house, very close to the mill but with 'gardens, hothouses, greenhouses, lawns, plantations, pleasure grounds' according to a bill of sale from 1869.<sup>85</sup> As soon as she established herself in Aireworth, Mary was visited by her siblings. The Roxbys were staying there when the census was taken in 1851, and young Edmund visited when on his school holidays, as did sister Elizabeth (as Charlotte attests).<sup>86</sup> Henry Clapham died suddenly in 1855 after seven years of marriage and after the couple had had only one child (Judith Elizabeth). He died of delirium tremens, which of course does suggest a disreputable life-style.<sup>87</sup>

Mary continued to live with her father-in-law at Aireworth for at least six years after his death. Then on 11 November 1862 she remarried, this time to the Revd George Hume Innes Pocock who was Vicar of Pentrich in industrial Derbyshire. He was the son of a solicitor and they married in Leeds.<sup>88</sup> She then went to live in Gisborne territory, close to her mother's relatives. Her only child was Judith Elizabeth Clapham whose life was eased to some degree by her inheritance from her mother's first marriage. When she in her turn came to be married, to a clergyman, a form of settlement was drawn up in which her fortune was described as follows: she had £19,000 from her mother's brother; her mother's own portion of £3,956 3s. 6d.; and then, according to the lawyers, about £10,000 as the heiress of Samuel Blakey Clapham (Henry's father), which seems an underestimate. In addition, what the lawyers do not specify is that she was residuary legatee of her grandfather's half-brother, Blakey Calvert, who left £35,000 in 1870 with legacies totalling £13,000.<sup>89</sup> As the draft settlement put it, rather bluntly, her husband, Revd John Wood was 'possessed of no property of his own and has merely his curacy which brings in £130 a year'. After his death Judith remarried and her second husband brought her back to the world of the Claphams and Keighley when in 1894 she married Hatton Greenwood Sugden, a cousin of her grandfather. This suggests that she and her mother had stayed in touch with Clapham connections for half a century.<sup>90</sup>

#### EDMUND ROBINSON (1832–69)

Lydia and Edmund's only son was christened Edmund. When Branwell left the employment of the Robinsons, Edmund was sent away to school, to the establishment of the Revd Theophilus Williams of Charlton Mackerel, near Somerton in Somerset. This cost £78 15s. half-yearly, in addition to what Edmund spent on books, haircuts, confectionery and clothing. He bought books in Bath and Devizes, largely school-books, but in 1848 splashed out a guinea on Jessop's *Deer Stalking* while in Simms and Son at Bath. He seems

<sup>84</sup>. M. Smith, *Letters of Charlotte Brontë* (Oxford, 2000), II, pp. 145–46.

<sup>85</sup>. Photograph in Keighley Reference Library, local studies collection; cf. M. L. Baumbec, *From Revival to Regency, a History of Keighley and Haworth* (Keighley, 1983), p. 49; George Ingle, *Yorkshire Cotton* (Preston, 1997), pp. 170–71; WYAS, KRL, MS 369.

<sup>86</sup>. BPM, RP, S100 (receipts), S101.

<sup>87</sup>. Death certificate says he had suffered from the illness for 'one day'; on suddenness of death see also BPM, RP, S100 (2 July 1855).

<sup>88</sup>. Marriage certificate.

<sup>89</sup>. BPM, RP, S58; will of B. Calvert, proved at Wakefield, 4 November 1870; cf. WYAS, KRL, BK 369 (indenture dated 18 Feb. 1884).

<sup>90</sup>. BPM, RP, S58.



to have been a slow learner, although one wonders how much of a start Branwell had given him. When Edmund was taken away from school by his mother in April 1850, the Revd Williams wrote a final report:

Few young men I think have passed the critical period of life at which he has arrived with more purity and innocence. His moral conduct has been exemplary and that his mental acquirements are to any inferior is his infelicity rather than his fault. For my own part I have laboured patiently and assiduously to impart instruction and I can with truth affirm that the preparation of my pupil Mr Hammond for his brilliant career at Hayleybury (only one competitor being above him last July) cost me far less stress of thought.<sup>91</sup>

Edmund was sent to another tutor, Revd Charles William Stocker, Rector of Draycottle-Moors, Staffordshire, near where his mother now lived. He studied there from October 1850 to April 1851, and the Rector then managed to get him into St Mary Hall, Oxford.<sup>92</sup> He left however without taking a degree. Edmund returned to York, and is to be found at Blake Street in 1854 and in 1857, when his address is also given as the Yorkshire Club, York; he was living in Union Terrace in 1858 and finally at Duncombe Street at the time of his death. Thorp Green Hall continued to be let until the estate was sold up to Harry Stephen Thompson of Kirby Hall in 1866 for £116,750.<sup>93</sup> This was virtually at the top of the market for agricultural land; a few years later, after the onset of the Great Agricultural Depression, the price would have been very different. Thompson could not pay for the property all at once, so he mortgaged the bulk of it (£80,000) with Edmund, which was a perfectly normal arrangement to make. In any case, Edmund himself had mortgaged some of the property, although only for relatively small sums.

Edmund's main occupation was fox-hunting. He kept a stable of fourteen horses and in the season was out six days a week. It was hunting which led to his death, on Thursday, 4 February 1869. The York and Ainsty Hunt met at Stainley House near Ripon and chased a fox down to the River Ure near Newby Hall where the fox swam the river pursued by the hounds. To cross the river there was a 'crane boat', a large barge-like construction propelled across the river by a system of chains strung from one bank to the other. This had been used in the past to convey the huntsmen successfully over the river. But this time the river was swollen by recent rain, fast-flowing and wider than usual. In the middle of the river 'Old Saltfish', the favourite hunter of the master of the fox hounds, Sir Charles Slingsby, became suddenly irritable and kicked out at the horse of Sir George Wombwell, a veteran of the celebrated charge of the Light Brigade. The second horse kicked back, and 'Old Saltfish' jumped overboard, dragging Sir Charles into the river too. The others in the boat rushed to the same side of the vessel to save Sir Charles, and it capsized. Altogether six people were drowned, including Edmund Robinson. Edmund could not swim and apparently had been the only man in the boat to remain in the saddle, believing that this would save him in the event of an accident; he seems to have had some sort of premonition of what was to happen. On the following Sunday, the Dean of York used the accident as the theme of his sermon: 'numerous and repeated are the warnings that this is not our final home'. *The Times* commented in its editorial on the Monday: 'The unanimity with which this general sentiment of sympathy has been expressed tells well for the unity of English national life.' On the Tuesday, Edmund Robinson's body was taken from his residence at Duncombe Street in York to Little Ouseburn: 'on the route through the city many tradesmen closed their shops and

<sup>91</sup>. BPM, RP, S91.

<sup>92</sup>. BPM, RP, S94, 8–12.

<sup>93</sup>. BPM, RP, S47.



the blinds of the windows of private houses were drawn down.' Edmund was the last male Robinson. His tragic death drew national attention which may at least have counteracted to some degree the effects of Mrs Gaskell's allegations about his mother made twelve years before.<sup>94</sup>

<sup>94</sup> *Leeds Mercury*, 5, 6, 8, 9 Feb. 1869; Ian Dewhirst, *Gleanings from Victorian Yorkshire* (Driffield, 1972), pp. 63–66; Joseph Wilkinson, *Worthies, Families and Celebrities of Barnsley and District* (London, n.d.), pp. 118–20.

## T. D. WHITAKER, 1759–1821: GENTLEMAN, CLERIC AND MAGISTRATE\*

By Pamela Maryfield

*This article follows a survey of T. D. Whitaker's historical writings (YAJ, 2003). It presents a portrait of a northern gentleman-scholar not untypical of his time and social class: a polymath in a provincial backwater, stimulated by the company and ideas of like-minded friends. From his letters, sermons and the observations of his circle he is shown confronting violence in society and politics with his belief in the efficacy of reason and education.*

Thomas Dunham Whitaker's reputation rests upon his historical works. Based on extensive research and using original materials, they were unusually readable for their time. *An History of the original parish of Whalley* (1801) and the *History and Antiquities of the Deanery of Craven* (1805) long continued to influence and inform subsequent county and local history writing.<sup>1</sup> Dr Whitaker's ambitious attempt to write a history of Yorkshire in several volumes was cut short by illness and his death. Although less rigorously researched than the earlier histories, the two volumes on Richmondshire remained valuable for the splendour of their illustrations by J. M. W. Turner.

Dr Whitaker was also a public figure held in great respect in the manufacturing districts of East Lancashire. There he was a modest landowner, a JP and a pluralist clergyman who preached regularly to his flocks and exercised pastoral care over them. To his large circle of friends he was 'the learned Dr Whitaker' and to his family he was a devoted and loving parent.

Pride in one's family and knowledge of its descent were natural to a man of Whitaker's time, class and interests. Pedigrees, descents, property and advowsons formed the core of most local histories and naturally their inclusion helped raise subscriptions to cover the cost of publication. Whitaker's family traced its descent from Thomas, who, in 1431, held land in the parish of Cliviger from the Leigh family, ancestors of the Towneleys.<sup>2</sup> The Whitakers gained distinction from the academic and ecclesiastical career of William, a younger son of Thomas and Elizabeth (formerly Nowell of Read), born in 1547. He became Master of St John's College, Cambridge, and Professor of Divinity and he was well-known for his trenchant expression of strict Calvinist doctrine. His polemical and controversial sermons, which placed him among the religious radicals of his age, were published in Geneva. His library was sufficiently valuable to be sought after his death, in 1595, by Queen Elizabeth. His achievements, which made him a player on the European stage, were thought particularly remarkable by his descendant, Thomas

\* This article is a sequel to Pamela Maryfield, 'T. D. Whitaker, 1759–1821: Historian of Yorkshire and Lancashire'. *YAJ*, 75 (2003), pp. 165–80. It was written before the publication of M. F. Snape, *The Church of England in Industrialising Society. The Lancashire Parish of Whalley in the 18th Century* (Woodbridge, 2003) which makes several references to Whitaker's career and ideas.

<sup>1</sup> Tony Kitto, *Making History: Dr Whitaker's 'History of Whalley' 1801–2001*, Catalogue of an Exhibition held at Towneley Hall Art Gallery and Museums, Burnley, 2001.

<sup>2</sup> T. D. Whitaker, *A History of the Original Parish of Whalley and Honor of Clitheroe, in the Counties of Lancaster and York*, 4th edn, 2 vols (London 1872 and 1876), II, pp. 203–04.



Dunham, for having had their foundations laid in Burnley Grammar School, then an unendowed relict of the chantry demolished at the Reformation. 'In this obscure retreat, and among people sunk in the grossest ignorance, appeared the first symptoms of a genius which was soon to be heard in the Vatican'.<sup>3</sup>

The house which Whitaker's father inherited in 1760, was known as the Holme. It had originally been a timber building with a central two-storeyed hall flanked by two projecting, gabled wings. Shortly after Queen Elizabeth's death in 1603, the main house and eastern wing were rebuilt in stone and handsomely furnished with carved oak mantle pieces, door frames and wainscotting. Another century passed before the other wing was similarly rebuilt. The process caused some excitement for, allegedly, two priest's chambers were discovered. The family was said to have remained loyal to the Roman Catholic faith throughout Elizabeth's time and then conformed to Anglicanism shortly after James I's accession. This seems unlikely, given the stout and rather extreme Protestantism of William Whitaker at Cambridge and the firm Anglicanism of his mother's Nowell relations, Alexander, Dean of St Paul's, and Laurence, Dean of Lichfield.<sup>4</sup>

Whitaker's education was normal for a boy of his background. He was sent as a private student first to Rochdale Grammar school and then, after a spell of illness, to Threshfield school in Wharfedale, often referred to as Hewitt's after its local founder. In effect, he received individual tuition and lodged with the Master. The system had the merit of avoiding the bullying and neglect which characterised the major public schools before they were reformed. It was also cheaper. Whitaker became a lifelong friend of the schoolmaster, William Sheepshanks. He paid an oblique compliment in an account of Richmond school and its famous master, James Tate; '... a good classical school is one of the most useful of all eleemosynary foundations and a good school master is one of the most respectable members of civil society.' It is an opinion borne out by the many clever boys of humble origins who became distinguished scholars after the foundations of their education were laid in small, remote northern grammar schools.<sup>5</sup>

William Sheepshanks, himself, is an example. He had been a fellow and tutor at St John's College, Cambridge. He was the eldest of seven sons of a yeoman farmer in the parish of Linton-in-Craven. Three were ordained and four became successful merchants, three in Leeds, one of whom was twice Mayor, and one in Philadelphia. As a sizar, William had to earn his keep by taking private pupils. Among these were Edward Wilson of Halton Gill in Wharfedale, who became tutor to young William Pitt, future bishops of Winchester and Lincoln, and a future Chief Justice. The latter was Edward Law, later Lord Ellenborough. Sheepshanks numbered among his Cambridge friends Ellenbrough's elder brother John Law, son of the bishop of Carlisle, second wrangler in his year and later bishop of Clonfert and then Elphin in Ireland, and William Paley from Giggleswick (Yorkshire), who became the most widely read interpreter of Anglican theology for several generations. He, too, was a senior wrangler. The pupils and friends of Sheepshanks were so outstanding as scholars at Cambridge that they were known as the 'Northern Lights'.<sup>6</sup>

With such an inspiring tutor and in idyllic surroundings, this episode made a lasting impression on young Thomas Whitaker. Writing thirty years later, he recalled the vividness of the sound of rushing water in the River Wharfe as he sat 'in the solitary evenings in the upper chamber of the Grammar School of Threshfield.' He had an equally clear

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 558–65.

<sup>4</sup> Whitaker, *Whalley*, 4th edn, II, p. 206.

<sup>5</sup> T. D. Whitaker, *An History of Richmondshire, in the North Riding of the County of York . . .*, 2 vols (London 1823), II, p. 102.

<sup>6</sup> T. D. Whitaker, *The History and Antiquities of the Deanery of Craven in the County of York*, 2nd edn (London, 1812), p. 474.



recollection of the villages of Linton, Grassington and Threshfield being among the coldest in Craven because of being exposed to the ‘western winds in unabated violence’.<sup>7</sup> His respect for Sheepshanks later matured into friendship. He made a life-long friendship with a younger brother, Thomas, who became the incumbent of Wimpole near Cambridge.

He had time free from the study of Latin, Greek and Mathematics, and wandered in the neighbourhood, meeting and talking to villagers about the ‘antiquated and almost forgotten modes of life which prevailed till within the last eighty years among the yeomanry of Wharfedale.’ He recalled one man telling of his surprise and mystification when he first saw the schoolmaster take tea. Even in Whitaker’s own schooldays, money was very scarce; many major household items were owned in common — the steeping trough for making malt from barley, the batting stone for washing linen and the corn-drying kiln, which acted as the ‘village coffee-house where the politics of the day were discussed.’ Almost everyone could spin either flax or wool; clothes were home-made and such luxuries as ribbons or shoe buckles entirely absent. Working hours were the hours of daylight so there was seldom need for candles except in the depth of winter when simple and smelly rush lights (a partly peeled rush dipped in animal fat) had to be used.<sup>8</sup>

In autumn 1775, Thomas was admitted as a pensioner to St John’s College, Cambridge.<sup>9</sup> It was another world after time-warped Wharfedale. But he found companionship with other northern boys and his family’s proximity to the sophistication of life at Towneley Hall would have prepared him for Cambridge. From his temperament, it seems he was not much tempted by Cambridge low-life, the world of prostitutes and gambling which easily ensnared many undergraduates who lodged outside their colleges. His tutor was William Arnold, a former colleague of Sheepshanks and another senior wrangler whose brilliance later ‘sank into incurable lunacy’. The college had a system of twice-yearly examinations to keep students at work and pin-point potential wranglers, and attendance twice daily at chapel was compulsory. So, in spite of the general laxity of life in Cambridge, the widespread absenteeism of tutors and the rarity of professors actually delivering lectures, there were constraints to help a serious young student to keep to the straight and narrow path.<sup>10</sup>

The syllabus was narrow, limited to classics, mathematics and divinity, often overlapping with work many boys would have already covered with a good private tutor, and teaching was often left to the students to provide for themselves. Thomas’s *Commonplace Book* for 1777 survives and provides a glimpse of two sets of lectures he attended. One set was on the detailed textual analysis of the four Gospels in Greek. Points of grammar, literary references, derivations of words take pride of place. There is no attempt at interpretation, doctrine or meaning. The other set of notes was a neat and careful summary of Bishop Halifax’s lectures on ‘Roman, Civil and Canon Law and their Authority in England.’<sup>11</sup>

Until his father’s death, in 1782, Whitaker intended to make a career in law.<sup>12</sup> Many years later, the Reverend S. J. Allen recalled that Whitaker had been a candidate for the chair in law at Cambridge. After Cambridge he seems to have continued his studies with William Sheepshanks who, in 1777, had become curate at the parish church in Leeds before securing the very valuable living of St John’s in Leeds. Joseph Sheepshanks, one

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 199.

<sup>8</sup> Whitaker, *Craven*, 1st edn (London, 1805), pp. 400–01, 406.

<sup>9</sup> *Admissions to the College of St John 1767–1802*, ed. R. F. Scott (Cambridge, 1931), p. 549.

<sup>10</sup> B. Ross Schneider, *Wordsworth’s Cambridge Education* (Cambridge, 1957), pp. 40–46.

<sup>11</sup> Chetham’s Library, Manchester, Mun. A.4.43.

<sup>12</sup> Chetham’s Library, Mun. E. 5.1.



of William's younger brothers, was already becoming successful as a Leeds clothier and Whitaker's parents knew and exchanged visits with the Marshalls. Their son, John, became a millionaire flax spinner and an MP for Leeds. Through these connections with the Leeds mercantile community, he met Lucy Thoresby and became engaged to her in 1780.<sup>13</sup> 'She was a descendant of a collateral branch of the family which produced Ralph, the seventeenth century Leeds antiquarian. The excitement of the engagement was somewhat eclipsed by 'a very great domestic Misfortune.' Whitaker's uncle Nowell was robbed of £200, murdered and his house set on fire. Whitaker was sent off to bring the body back to the Holme but he arrived too late. Burial had already taken place in Cheshire where he was killed.<sup>14</sup>

Exactly two years later, in June 1782, Whitaker inherited the estate of the Holme-in-Cliviger, to which he devoted his energies and income for the next fifteen years. He married Lucy in 1783 and began renovating the house which he described as 'irregular but not inconvenient'.<sup>15</sup> He soon turned to his main interest of improving the estate. From 1784 he began the tree planting which transformed the area. Cliviger became a 'prettily wooded gorge' with the Holme 'in the most picturesque part of the Calder ravine'.

It may have been the recollected beauty of the Wharfe at Grassington and Bolton Abbey that inspired him to soften his surroundings in Cliviger by tree-planting. It was an activity very much in fashion. Thomas Lister, first Lord Ribblesdale, had for some years been busily engaged in redesigning Gisburn Park. He planted over one million trees through which he created avenues to focus on the house or features in his new landscape. The Cliviger scheme was less ambitious. Whitaker made a virtue from necessity by 'rejecting every temptation to minute and expensive decorations' — by this he meant the statues, temples and grottoes which were all the rage — and instead cutting 'in various directions, simple pathways along the plantations several miles in circuit [to] exhibit many home and distant views by no means uninteresting'. Over 400,000 larches, native birch, rowan and ash were planted between 1784 and 1799. For the planting of 64,000 larches in one year from June 1790, Whitaker was awarded the gold medal of the Society of Arts.<sup>16</sup>

This was far-sighted, if expensive, improvement. The estate was in debt when Whitaker died in 1821, partly because of the cost of the plantations. However, as larches came to maturity, they were felled to provide pit props in the local mines. Whitaker was quick to appreciate and adopt new farming practices. In his writings he noted approvingly where new methods such as the planting of turnips and other winter crops were in use. He also railed at changes which were damaging to the land. The fashion for improving productivity by using lime was no substitute for manure and would, he argued, eventually impoverish the soil. He inserted a clause in his tenants' agreements that they should not sell the hay they produced. In this way he encouraged his tenants to retain cattle (and their manure) on their farms. It was a practice taken up by his neighbours, Colonel Hargreaves and Mr Towneley.<sup>17</sup>

In 1785, he was ordained deacon, then priest a year later. Whitaker was not assigned to a living but he probably had in mind seeking one in the future in order to provide for a growing family, and he had begun to plan the restoration of the ruined chapel which gave its name to Holme Chapel. It had been founded by Richard Whitaker in 1533 as a chantry so that he and the souls of his ancestors would benefit from the prayers

<sup>13</sup>. R. V. Taylor, *Leeds Worthies* (London, 1865), p. 286.

<sup>14</sup>. Chetham's Library, F. R. Raines, *Lancashire Manuscripts*, vol. 31, p. 143.

<sup>15</sup>. Whitaker, *Whalley*, 4th edn, II, p. 206.

<sup>16</sup>. Whitaker, *Whalley*, 4th edn, I, p. xiv.

<sup>17</sup>. Chetham's Library, Whitaker family letters, 17 May 1828; Whitaker, *Craven* 1st edn, p. 171.



of the chantry priest. It was soon suppressed, in 1547, as part of Edward VI's Protestant reformation, and claimed as his own property by Thomas Whitaker, son and heir of the founders. Until 1742 it was without a minister and local people had to make the journey into Burnley to attend church. It had received a small annual income of £1 from Henry Wood, a local man who became clerk of works to Sir Christopher Wren in charge of the Portland quarries. (Whitaker owned Wood's account book).

Whitaker's description of the chapel he inherited was of a 'rude but picturesque little building only 42 feet by 18 within. It was built of irregular but deep courses of masonry of which there were only six from the foundation to the roof.' Gothic carving and inscriptions in the choir had been 'barbarously destroyed', to the indignation of a historian aware that valuable evidence had been lost for ever. 'The curious perforated old pulpit of Henry VIII's time only remains' and the windows were darkened by sycamores swarming with rooks 'for 200 years almost the only orators of the place.'<sup>18</sup>

In 1788 Whitaker pulled down the old chapel, and rebuilt it on higher ground at a cost of £870, half of which he contributed. With help from Queen Anne's Bounty (£300), a fund to provide improved stipends for the clergy, the new chapel was endowed with 130 acres of glebe land. The old pulpit was retained, two stalls came from the old church at Blackburn when it was demolished a few years later, and old bench ends, perhaps originally from Whalley Abbey, were installed, or perhaps re-used from the old chapel. It was completed and consecrated by the Bishop of Chester on 29 July 1794.

For some years, Whitaker was content to exercise his ministry as perpetual curate among the farmers, weavers and miners of Cliviger. His sermons became famous but his dual role as landlord and parson probably had more influence in frequently having 300 or more in his congregation out of a dispersed population of 900 or so. However, with his intellectual gifts and his seemingly boundless energy, he looked for other outlets. 'With me to be employed is to be happy'.

During the early years of their marriage, the Whitakers were often resident near Leeds at North Hall. The two elder children, Thomas Thoresby and Lucy, were born there in 1785 and 1787 and there were other long visits in 1800, 1801 and 1802. This latter period coincided with Whitaker's receiving the Doctorate of Law. He also qualified as a Justice of the Peace for the West Riding in May 1802.<sup>19</sup> Occasionally he was invited to preach in Leeds. Two of his published sermons marked general Fast Days in 1794 and 1795, called to stiffen national resistance in the midst of war. The first of these was on the subject of 'Religion and Loyalty' and its publication was at the request of St John's congregation. Another sermon in 1796 was to help raise funds for Leeds Infirmary. In urging his congregation to give generously, he commended 'social giving' as a way of ensuring charity was well-directed. He returned to the theme when invited to encourage support for Benefit Societies: collective gifts used by professionals can relieve more distress than haphazard gifts to individuals. His reputation in the pulpit grew. He was frequently invited to preach on special occasions and was often reported in the *Gentleman's Magazine*. At the consecration of Salesbury chapel (8 September 1807) his sermon drew admiration for the manner in which it dealt with contemporary social ills. 'A very masterly performance' was the verdict of Thomas Starkie, vicar of Blackburn.<sup>20</sup>

Whitaker's own views on sermons were expressed quite trenchantly in some of the articles he wrote for the *Quarterly Review*.<sup>21</sup> Having praised the Bishop of Asaph, Samuel

<sup>18</sup>. Whitaker, *Whalley*, 4th edn, II, pp. 206–11.

<sup>19</sup>. Chetham's Library, Lancs. MSS, vol. 45, p. 205.

<sup>20</sup>. Whitaker, *Whalley*, 4th edn, I, p. xv; *Wilson's Miscellanies*, ed. F. R. Raines, Chetham Society, vol. 45 (1857), p. 192.

<sup>21</sup>. *Quarterly Review*, 3 (Feb.–May 1810), pp. 398–409.



Horsley, for 'his energy and industry', Whitaker continued by suggesting that the Bishop had tried to be too clever. Often, he complained, the Bishop was abstruse, or created difficulties where there were none, apparently for the sake of unravelling them. He 'strained the texts, . . . grasped at too much' and was too obscure for general readers. Whitaker could damn in a phrase: 'But Dr Horsley pursued a middle course, the worst of all'. By contrast, he praised William Paley's modesty, 'unvarnished honesty' and his cool, acute reasoning. These qualities and a tendency to provide useful explanations of religious subjects rather than flights of oratory, secured Whitaker's approval of the most widely studied theologian in a century.<sup>22</sup>

The success of the histories of Whalley and Craven extended Whitaker's reputation and widened his circle of friends and acquaintances, many of whom had helped find original materials for these volumes. It gave him encouragement to return to an earlier idea, a history of the Roman Empire. It was to be a project designed as a riposte to Gibbon's magisterial *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Predictably for a man of his beliefs he was shocked by chapters fifteen and sixteen when the first volume was published, in 1787, while he was still a student at Cambridge. Whitaker shared the conventions of his time, class and calling; he could not conceive of any treatment of Christian history which was secular, which challenged credulity and, in Gibbon's case, was tinged, just a little, with scepticism. 'That great but depraved and mischievous performance' was his succinct opinion, but 'its fame and splendour' was an obstacle to a rival version. However, for a time, he seriously considered it was a duty to produce a version which, while acknowledging Gibbon, would be a book 'the pious may read without a sigh and the modest without a blush'. Wiser friends were probably instrumental in dissuading him.<sup>23</sup>

In January 1809, Whitaker achieved 'the greatest object of [his] wishes': presentation to the living of the parish of Whalley which was in the gift of the Archbishop of Canterbury. He had been recommended by the former Bishop of Chester, his diocesan bishop, and by his *History of Whalley*, a copy of which had been presented to the Archbishop by Thomas Sheepshanks. The living was worth £100 per annum, double the income from Holme Chapel, although that derived largely from his endowment. Initially, however, Whalley was a drain on his purse, as he wrote to Thomas Wilson in March 1809. The vicarage house, 'where I mean to reside as much, especially in winter, as I conveniently can' was very much in need of repair and had a tenant refusing to leave and refusing to pay dilapidations. There was even talk of court action. By April, however, the problems were solved because Whitaker paid and he was ready to move in. He was gratified by his great welcome but 'a set of wretched and filthy cottages under [his] eye and nose at the vicarage' promised to make life uncomfortable. Eventually he had them pulled down.<sup>24</sup>

The condition of the church was little better than the vicarage. Whitaker's son, Robert Nowell Whitaker, recalled that there was only a sand and gravel floor. When his father remonstrated with the patron of the living, Lady Howe, her brief comment was 'slag it' (cover it with cinders). Whitaker felt a keen sense of duty to live at Whalley although he pondered how to 'pack my large family within the walls'. There were six children, four boys and two girls. Whalley was also more centrally situated, Whitaker continued, for achieving his 'wish to preach annually in every church and chapel within the parish . . . As I am a wretched horseman, I propose to economise distances by taking two neighbouring churches every Sunday . . . It will, at least, bring me acquainted with the parishioners

<sup>22</sup>. *Quarterly Review*, 2 (Aug. 1809), p. 75.

<sup>23</sup>. *Wilson's Miscellanies*, p. 183.

<sup>24</sup>. *Ibid.*, p. 201.



and *noscere exercitus, nosci exercitus* [*sic*] [to know the army is to be known by the army] may be applied to a parochial minister as well as an officer'. Whalley had the further convenience of being nearer most of his closest friends — Adam Cottam in Whalley, Thomas Starkie in Blackburn, James Maden in Bacup and Thomas Wilson in Clitheroe — and having a milder climate in winter than the 'unkindly blasts that sweep over our eastern moors'.<sup>25</sup>

The friends were the core of a philosophical circle which met monthly at the Holme to discuss a topic arranged in advance. According to Thomas Wilson, the meetings were marked by warm friendship, humour, broad-ranging scholarship and 'much sympathy of moral and religious feeling, elegant hospitality, pleasurable conversation and great enjoyment'.<sup>26</sup> Wilson was the schoolmaster and, later, vicar of Clitheroe. He had been educated at Sedbergh School and privately by John Dawson of Garsdale, one of the finest mathematicians in the country. Wilson brought urbanity, wisdom and wit to Whitaker's circle. When he forgot to attend one meeting he conveyed his disappointment and regrets in a few lines of Horace.<sup>27</sup> His correspondence hints at his wit: describing Lord Ribblesdale's pompous chaplain, Dr Collins, at a gathering in Broughton Hall as Cardinal Collini, a reference to the Catholic Tempest household; and passing on tit bits of gossip among the Craven gentry — how Miss Currer was deflecting the advances of Richard Heber on the grounds of disparity of age.<sup>28</sup>

John Dawson was also a member of this group. He was an immensely talented scholar as well as medical practitioner. His work in Garsdale transformed the lives of farmers and cottagers because he succeeded in teaching basic hygiene. In turn, this dramatically reduced infant mortality. The incumbents of Harwood and Waddington, Roland Ingram, the vicar of Giggleswick and Henry Coulthurst, the vicar of Halifax, were other regular members. Coulthurst and Whitaker seemed to have enjoyed a warm friendship, having in common the problems of ministering to very large parishes. Their widows long continued to correspond and exchange visits.<sup>29</sup>

An even closer bond eventually linked Whitaker and another regular member of the philosophical circle. Thomas Starkie was the vicar of Blackburn. He had been a pupil of Sheepshanks at Cambridge and married his son, Thomas, to Whitaker's eldest daughter, Lucy. The two Starkies held a unique distinction in having both been the senior wrangler in their respective years at Cambridge.<sup>30</sup>

Linked with this circle of scholars were local gentry who shared some of their cultured interests, particularly in antiquities, art and collecting. Thomas Lister Parker of Browsholme, whose brother later became vicar of Waddington, was another former pupil of Thomas Wilson. He was a keen and knowledgeable art collector and probably did a great deal to persuade his friend, Walter Fawkes of Farnley Hall near Otley, to patronise contemporary art. From this initiative came the fruitful partnership between Fawkes and J. M. W. Turner. In 1808, and again in 1816, Turner was a guest at Browsholme. Lister Parker shared his passion for art with his cousin, Sir John Leicester, who was responsible for London's first public art gallery in Hill street. Jeffry Wyatville was employed to design an art gallery at Browsholme.

<sup>25</sup>. Chetham's Library, Mun. E. 5.1 — E 5.2, 220. Though Whitaker was an able Latinist he could also be careless.

<sup>26</sup>. Whitaker, *Whalley*, 4th edn, I, pp. xxvi.

<sup>27</sup>. *Wilson's Miscellanies*, pp. 196–97.

<sup>28</sup>. *Ibid.*, pp. 183, 208.

<sup>29</sup>. Chetham's Library, Whitaker letters, September 1822.

<sup>30</sup>. J. A. Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigiensis, Part II, 1752–1910*, vol 2 (Cambridge, 1940).



Whitaker's neighbour, Charles Towneley, shared Lister Parker's passion for art collecting. His collection of Roman antiquities, fine sculptures, temple fragments, inscriptions and coins eventually became part of the collections at the British Museum of which he was trustee. He was, perhaps, the most famous collector of his day and was nicknamed 'the Connoisseur'. Towneley hired Turner to do the illustrations for the *History of Whalley* and was generous to Whitaker in opening the family archives, which included the important collection of his ancestor, Christopher. Completing this group were Richard Heber of Marton, the scholarly collector of books, transcriptions and manuscripts, and Richard Henry Beaumont of Little Mitton, famed for his quiet but indispensable work on the Dodsworth manuscripts. It was on Beaumont's initiative that Whitaker embarked on editing the Radcliffe letters for publication.<sup>31</sup>

Richard Heber influenced another of Whitaker's excursions into editing. Heber's special interest in the development of the English language had resulted in his acquiring two manuscript copies of Langland's 'Piers Plowman'.<sup>32</sup> Whitaker worked on these between 1810 and 1813 when John Murray published his gallant, but somewhat flawed edition. Heber's half-brother, Thomas, used his opportunity as a fellow of Brasenose College, Oxford, to help Whitaker by searching the Bodleian collections and transcribing documents.<sup>33</sup>

The evidence of family letters, mainly from Whitaker's wife to his daughter-in-law, and reminiscences of S. J. Allen, Whitaker's assistant from 1816, suggest that family life at the Holme and at Whalley, in the winter, was not simply orderly but loving and secure. Whitaker's son, Robert, recalled the routine. His father breakfasted before 8 am, then went to his study upstairs overlooking the yew tree said to have been planted for the birth of William Whitaker in 1547. Reading a page or two of Tacitus to set the mood and style was the usual preliminary to sorting papers or writing. Sometimes Allen took dictation but, more usually, the young man sat in a room below where he copied the text for the printers. At about noon, Whitaker would go out to his greyhounds and his woods. He would spend some time with the workmen and then, on his walks, plan his writing. His son said that 'the most admired and beautiful portions of his writings were composed' during these woodland walks. Dinner was at three; little was then done until 6 pm; then more reading or writing in the study until 7.30 pm. The family then gathered, and while Mrs Whitaker and her daughters sewed, the sons would read aloud from Clarendon, Robertson, Southey or the latest of Mr Scott's novels which John Murray sent as they were published, together with books for review in the *Quarterly*. 'One evening', recalled Robert Whitaker, 'while we were so engaged [my father] was called downstairs to see a gold chain which . . . the ploughman had just found. The plough had turned over but not broken, a very beautiful gold torque on his land. The gold glittered in the furrow . . .'<sup>34</sup>

Whitaker passed on his enthusiasm for his plantations, books and antiquities to at least two of his four sons. The eldest, Thomas Thoresby, graduated from Oxford in 1810, became curate of Colne, then a parochial chapel within the parish of Whalley, and married Jane Hordern, daughter of a Wolverhampton banker in 1812. In two successive years the family suffered two tragic bereavements. The younger daughter, Mary Charlotte, died from scarlet fever at the age of twenty-two in April 1816. Her brother William, having been, according to his father, 'at the point of Death by God's Mercy

<sup>31</sup> Maryfield, 'T. D. Whitaker', *YAJ*, 75 (2003), p. 172.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 172–73.

<sup>33</sup> *DNB*, Charles Towneley; Richard Heber.

<sup>34</sup> Whitaker, *Whalley*, 4th edn, I, pp. xlvi–xlix; Chetham's Library, Whitaker letters, *passim*.



recovered'. The youngest son, John 'appeared to be attacked by the same Dreadful Complaint' but it was measles. The next year, Thomas had a fatal fall from a horse while riding near Ribchester. Whitaker felt his son's sudden death keenly: '... light and sunshine ... are now overcast by a gloom never to be dispelled'. He wrote touchingly of his son as pupil and friend, his 'constant companion in public duties and private society' and, in the epitaph he composed, as 'the hope and joy of his parents'.<sup>35</sup>

The Whitakers sought comfort after Mary Charlotte's death at Watermillock on Ullswater, where they spent a month with their long-standing Leeds friends, John and Jane Marshall. Whitaker had recuperated there in 1811, after a serious illness. By 1816, John Marshall was probably the richest merchant in Leeds and Watermillock was the first of five estates he purchased in Cumberland. Lucy Whitaker and Jane Marshall were old friends. Jane was the daughter of William Pollard, banker of Halifax and a life-long friend of Dorothy Wordsworth. There was another connection with Lucy Whitaker who was a friend of Elizabeth Threlkeld, the 'aunt' who brought up Dorothy Wordsworth. Elizabeth became Mrs Rawson and was still being visited in Halifax by Lucy when in her eighties. With such connections it is not so surprising that John Marshall sent his eldest son, William, to lodge as a private pupil with the Whitakers for a fee of £200 a year. Whitaker prepared the boy for entry to the Inns of Court and, incidentally, to become a country gentleman.<sup>36</sup>

Samuel Allen became another periodic member of the Whitaker household during his Cambridge vacations. He acted as secretary, transcriber and research assistant and travelled with Whitaker while he was preparing the *History of Lonsdale* and the *History of Richmondshire*. He may have been recommended by one of Whitaker's friends at Cambridge, Herbert Marsh or Thomas Sheepshanks. Young Allen had a keen eye for architectural drawing which proved valuable to the Richmondshire enterprise. He remained a loyal friend to the Whitaker family. He retained his keen interest in local and family history during the time he was vicar of Salesbury, near Blackburn, and was a correspondent, in later life, of Canon Raines, whom he may first have met when Raines was at school in Burnley, where later, from 1835–39, Allen served as schoolmaster.<sup>37</sup>

For ten years from 1809 to 1819, Whitaker was a regular reviewer for the newly-launched *Quarterly Review*. It became a very respected heavy-weight among literary magazines and, although reviewers were anonymous, their distinctive views and styles became known. Whitaker's reputation was enhanced by the quality of his articles. He ranged over historical, literary and theological works. His review of Bishop Warburton's sermons was judged 'one of the most perfect specimens of acute analysis and impassioned eloquence that the papers of modern criticism record'. In 1815, he reviewed Wordsworth's *Poems* which included a reissue of the *Lyrical Ballads*, and the latest poem, *The White Doe of Rylstone*. The latter had been directly inspired by Whitaker's account of the misfortunes of the Catholic Norton family of Rylstone during the Pilgrimage of Grace. Mrs Marshall gave the Wordsworths a copy of the *History of Craven* which led to a long walk in Wharfedale and, on returning to Grasmere, the poem on the Norton legend.<sup>38</sup>

Whitaker was a restless man and fretted for cerebral occupation even when busy with establishing himself in his new post as vicar of Whalley. He turned to his favourite author for inspiration, and composed a treatise in Latin in the style of Tacitus on the subject of

<sup>35</sup> YAS, MS 95, Volume of letters to William Radcliffe, Rouge Croix ... relating to Dr Whitaker's Histories; Chetham's Library, Lancs. MSS, vol. 45, p. 217.

<sup>36</sup> W. G. Rimmer, *Marshalls of Leeds Flax-Spinners 1788–1886* (Cambridge 1960), p. 216; Whitaker letters, 18 January 1825.

<sup>37</sup> Venn, *Part II, 1752–1910*, vol. 1 (Cambridge, 1940).

<sup>38</sup> Juliet Barker, *Wordsworth a Life* (London 2000), pp. 360–63.



the 1745 Jacobite Rebellion. It relied heavily on John Hone's 1802 account of Bonnie Prince Charlie's abortive attempt to capture the English throne. Whitaker acknowledged the fact. *De Motu per Britanniam Civico Annis MDCCXLV, MDCCXLVI*, ('Concerning the Civil Disturbance in Britain 1745, 1746'), was dedicated to his Cambridge friend Herbert Marsh, Lady Margaret professor of Divinity, later Bishop of Llandaff and then of Peterborough. It was a small edition of 250 copies and represents a rather archaic indulgence.<sup>39</sup>

While preparing material for the *History of Lonsdale*, Whitaker undertook another editorial venture. This was an edition of Edwin Sandys' *Sermons*, the first since 1616. The Elizabethan Archbishop of York, 1577–88 was born in Hawkshead in Furness and played a leading role in determining the outcome of the Elizabethan church settlement, making it rather more Protestant than the Queen would have wished, but then, as bishop of London, becoming one of its stoutest defenders against puritan attacks. His sermons set an example of teaching the faith through preaching and therefore held a special interest for Whitaker.<sup>40</sup>

A new clerical responsibility as well as a useful income came his way in January 1813 when he was invited to act as rector of Heysham until Thomas Clarkson, who had inherited the advowson from his father, should come of age. Mrs Whitaker indicated that he undertook the office as a favour. What is certain is that he did not behave like many clerical pluralists and content himself with merely appointing a curate while drawing for himself the major part of the income. Heysham served well as a base from which to explore the Lune valley and Furness. Mrs Whitaker referred to periods of residence in Heysham and Whitaker told his publisher he would be there for six weeks in late summer, 1814. Given his conscientious pastoral care in Whalley and, from 1818, in Blackburn, it is unlikely that he neglected Heysham.<sup>41</sup>

Thomas Clarkson was ordained priest in 1818; a few months later, Whitaker resigned as rector, giving way to Clarkson. Having already accepted the demanding appointment as vicar of Blackburn on the death of his friend, Thomas Starkie, he laid himself open to accusations of pluralism. 'Though possessing a delicate frame' and approaching his sixtieth birthday (then regarded as old age) he made no concessions either to health or years and took up his duties at Blackburn with the same intention of regular preaching as he had declared in first being appointed to Whalley.<sup>42</sup>

Since he was presented to the vicarage of the populous and extensive parish of Blackburn, he has resided in the town the greater part of the year and takes his full share, along with the Curate in performing three services every Sunday, in a large church, and to a crowded congregation. In Dr Whitaker's church Divine Service is performed and a Sermon preached on the Sunday night.

This extract from a letter to the *Gentleman's Magazine* in October 1820 'by one who is totally unknown to him' suggests that Whitaker was a focus of controversy.<sup>43</sup> A fellow magistrate and rival for the vicarage of Rochdale, W. R. Hay, considered him 'dictatorial, overbearing and insolent'.<sup>44</sup> Hay was not the most impartial of witnesses. He was known as an absentee pluralist, and an uncompromising magistrate as chairman of the Salford Quarter sessions. He followed the government's line in making no concessions to political

<sup>39</sup>. Whitaker, *Whalley*, 4th edn, I, p. xxxv.

<sup>40</sup>. J. E. Neale, *Elizabeth I and her Parliaments, 1559–81* (London, 1953), pp. 185–86; Christopher Haigh, *English Reformations* (Oxford, 1993), p. 269.

<sup>41</sup>. Venn, vol. 1 for Thomas Clarkson; Whitaker letters, June 1824; YAS, MS. 95.

<sup>42</sup>. Whitaker, *Whalley*, 4th edn, I, p. xlii.

<sup>43</sup>. *Gentleman's Magazine* (Oct. 1820), part 2, p. 402.

<sup>44</sup>. Chetham's Library, Lancs MSS, vol. 36 pp. 276–77.



reformers or dissenters. It was he who ordered the Riot Act to be read at the St Peter's Fields rally in Manchester in August 1819. It was rumoured that his subsequent appointment to the wealthy living of Rochdale was a reward for his political services.

Whitaker became a focus of controversy as a magistrate and as vicar of Blackburn. He inherited from Starkie the plans to pull down the church and rebuild. This entailed raising church rates to pay the costs, a deeply unpopular move at a time of distress in the mills, opposition to the introduction of power looms, and the growth of religious dissent. As a magistrate, Whitaker had already, in 1817, taken an uncompromising line on civic order. Although his sympathies were with the government and on the side of maintaining public order against the radical movement, he was not unthinking in his views. However, like many in his class and of his age, he was deeply influenced by the chaos which had typified the French Revolution. To him any assembly of the lower classes could easily be transformed into a Jacobinical mob: Whitaker went a step further and recognised that the worst victims of the want and privation which followed the end of European war in 1815 tended to 'suffer and submit to Providence.'<sup>45</sup> But those whose suffering was less became the discontented and disaffected. They opposed the Government, spread sedition in pamphlets and inflammatory speeches and urged impossible remedies. Among their leaders was Henry Hunt, famed for his oratory and demanding reform of Parliament, universal suffrage (for men) and annual parliaments. The economic depression after 1815 caused unemployment, especially among the industrial workers in Lancashire towns, and was exacerbated by the imposition of protective tariffs on the import of foreign corn. Whitaker argued that the policy gave farmers a guaranteed price and so encouraged production. The argument was less persuasive after the harvest failure in 1818.

In 1817 the magistrates of Blackburn, who bore a heavy responsibility for the maintenance of public order in an age before the existence of a civilian police force, called a public meeting to rally support for 'the laws and constitution'. Letters and petitions of support were received and read out from local organisations — the Society of Methodists, the Congregation of Baptists and the Catholic College at Stonyhurst. Surprisingly, for he had a reputation for rarely speaking in public on political matters, Whitaker rose to speak, making such an impression that his words were widely reported. He warned against sedition, conspiracy and the 'able and desperate' men who used the funds of benefit societies to threaten the peace of society. He also defended the 'establishment' against criticism, having already suggested that their opponents were irreligious in burlesquing the creed and litany in their pamphlets. Tithes, he declared, were essential as payment for church services; magistrates enjoyed no idle sinecure; they 'serve their country not only without fee or reward but at a considerable expense to themselves'. As for the proposed reforms: annual parliaments would cause an epidemic of riots; the frenzy produced by elections was sufficient once in seven years; while universal suffrage would give the vote to those susceptible to bribes and demagogues and most unfit to judge the quality of a candidate. As for the economic problems, these would not be cured by a radical programme.

The view of the unbending patrician comes through, when, having dismissed equality as impossible, leading to military despotism as in France, Whitaker asserted that from inequity the virtues of courtesy, compassion, bounty, patronage and protection all stem. The *Leeds Intelligencer* reported that this 'torrent of eloquence' completely electrified his audience and 'the disaffected sneaked out one by one, overpowered by his arguments or convinced by their consciences'. Admiration for Whitaker's performance was enhanced

<sup>45</sup> *Gentleman's Magazine* (Aug. 1820), part 2, p. 104.



in the eyes of his friends by their view that Blackburn was one of those areas 'where non-residence or extinction of the ancient gentry had much weakened the civilising influence of polished manners in the humbler classes of society'.<sup>46</sup> In 1819, popular pressure reached a new level of exasperation, 'Orator' Henry Hunt led weavers' unions in demonstrations in Lancashire and raised alarm among magistrates, whose only means of defending the peace was to read the Riot Act ordering the crowd to disperse. Beyond that, remained only the desperate measure of ordering troops into action. In St Peter's Fields, Manchester, on 16 August, a nervous chairman of magistrates, the Rev. W. R. Hay, did just that against an orderly, good-humoured but huge crowd of men, women and children. It resulted in a tragedy with epic consequences, like the battle of Waterloo, and so was dubbed Peterloo. There were eleven deaths and nearly five hundred casualties. In these circumstances, it was a brave magistrate who, faced with similar, if smaller scale political agitation, read the Riot Act. Whitaker did so in Blackburn during that difficult summer and autumn, an event which was never forgotten by a schoolboy at Burnley Grammar School who witnessed the 'dignified bearing and haughty independence of manner' of the magistrate.<sup>47</sup>

The industrial towns of east Lancashire, and Blackburn in particular, remained in a state of uneasy tension throughout the autumn of 1819. This was in spite of the arrest of popular leaders and punitive government legislation. Whitaker was in frequent correspondence with James Maden of Bacup, a fellow magistrate, relying not on the post, but on servants who waited and returned with a reply. After one meeting in Whalley, Whitaker wrote to Lord Sidmouth, the Home Secretary, for help in the shape of troops ready to enforce order if there were an armed uprising. The response was a disappointment. Only if troops could be spared would they be available 'when wanted'. Whitaker understood this to mean 'when an Insurrection should actually break out'. He left Lord Sidmouth in no doubt of the inadequacy of his response: '... such assistance would be equivalent to none at all'. His concerns were well founded. A plot had been uncovered in which the radicals were to seize the arms and horses of those few soldiers already in Blackburn while the officers and men were at Sunday morning worship.<sup>48</sup>

Another request for troops was made on behalf of the Burnley magistrates. (It was probably granted, for a few months later the Burnley magistrates were prepared to use them against striking miners.) In November 1819, there were rumours and more reports of an imminent 'and general Rising of these wicked and misguided People'. Whitaker sought help for people in Bacup from Burnley but nevertheless, such was his uncertainty, that he recommended his friend James Maden and other respectable people to arm themselves for self-defence and assured them that such action would not be outside the law.<sup>49</sup>

This stern defence of the status quo was not a simple reaction to defend a privileged life-style and the dominance of the landed and propertied classes. Whitaker should be judged by the standards and knowledge of his time. If, as a magistrate, he failed in his duty, civil order would break down and all classes would suffer. He perceived in the growth of manufacturing and its consequent 'accumulated masses' in the Lancashire towns and over-grown villages, a dangerous, inflammatory society where people had undergone 'a kind of fermentation', producing human corruption whose 'degree of malignity [was] not to be exceeded out of Hell'. With 'next to nothing' of policing in the area,

<sup>46</sup>. *Gentleman's Magazine* (1817), part 1, pp. 212-13.

<sup>47</sup>. Whitaker, *Whalley*, 4th edn, I, p. xliii.

<sup>48</sup>. *Lancs. MSS*, vol. 45, pp. 213, 219.

<sup>49</sup>. *Ibid.*, p. 219.



and people lacking education ‘in domestic discipline’, there was little hope of the lower orders submitting to civil authority.

As he had declared in his speech in Blackburn in 1817, reform of the Parliamentary system was not a solution. Rather he turned to education and the influences of the church as an agent of education in moral behaviour. Central to the church’s influence was the sermon to instruct, educate and warn. However, fanaticism in religion, which he equated with Evangelical outpourings, and the inspirational preaching of the dissenters, were dangerous, especially to the lower orders. ‘The weakness of their understanding exposes them to every delusion.’<sup>50</sup>

He had his own programme of reform. The church needed better service both from its parsons and churchwardens. The latter, of course, had a major responsibility for dealing with poverty. Both sets of men needed to be more professional, more involved with the personal and social needs of their parishioners. Church services needed to be better performed and charity needed to be more liberal, more systematic and less dependent on individual bounty. In his younger days, spent in Leeds at the turn of the century, he had gained direct experience of a well-regulated and supported charity which established the Leeds Infirmary. By his preaching he had helped to raise funds and he had been a regular visitor, learning practically from his experience.<sup>51</sup> Later his direct involvement with his parishes, Whalley, Blackburn and Holme Chapel, had given him a broad grasp of social evils stemming from ignorance, poverty and inadequate medical care. Obstinance and ignorance pervaded isolated rural communities, while industrial towns experiencing the economic dislocation of war and the post-war period posed new problems to which a timid government had no answers.<sup>52</sup>

In 1820, disaffected miners converged on Padiham and planned to march into Burnley. Although ill, probably with dropsy, Whitaker resisted demands from fellow magistrates that the miners should be met with military force in Burnley and he drove out a mile along the Padiham road where he met the miners near Gannow. He was helped into the driver’s seat and persuaded them to disperse, ‘and such was the respect paid to him when he had finished, that the strong rough men lifted him down, like a child and told him, “Doctor, put your foot here; we will take care that you shall not be hurt”’.<sup>53</sup>

Without doubt, the anxiety and burden of responsibility during these difficult years adversely affected Whitaker’s health. It seems that in 1820 he suffered a mild stroke and by the summer of 1821 he was seriously ill with asthma. His wife expressed her anxiety in July. ‘Poor Whitaker had such bad nights. I was so distressed in my mind and got so little sleep that everything was a Task’. In August he had a severe cold and had to sit up at night in order to breathe. Nonetheless he was able to attend a civic ceremony in Blackburn to receive a gift of plate engraved to commemorate his brave leadership against the forces of disorder. He was able to receive a social visit from the Bishop of Chester (the younger brother of his Cambridge friend, John Law) and in September he attended the consecration of the rebuilt church in Blackburn, although he was fatigued with the numbers he had to speak to.<sup>54</sup>

Whitaker died at Blackburn vicarage on 18 December 1821. He was buried in the family vault at Holme Chapel on 24 December, according to his very exact instructions, in a coffin hollowed out of one of his larch trees. He had selected it himself a few weeks

<sup>50</sup>. Whitaker, *Whalley*, 4th edn, II, p. 577.

<sup>51</sup>. Lincs. MSS, vol. 45, pp. 203, 217.

<sup>52</sup>. Whitaker, *Whalley* 4th edn, II, p. 577.

<sup>53</sup>. *Ibid.*, 4th edn, 2 vols (London 1872 and 1876), I, p. xliii.

<sup>54</sup>. Chetham’s Library, Whitaker letters 1, 3, 4, 5.



earlier.<sup>55</sup> In spite of his immense scholarship — his erudition had once sent Richard Watson, bishop of Llandaff, searching as far as the fourth and fifth shelves of his library for assistance in sustaining a discussion — and his austere character, he was held in high esteem and affection.<sup>56</sup> Towards the end, when ‘his fine understanding [was] disordered with the pain and opiates’, many friends in Blackburn vied ‘with each other who should show Dr Whitaker more respect and affection’.<sup>57</sup> His funeral was followed by many from Blackburn on horseback and in three post chaises, and joined by other prominent figures from Burnley. A lengthy obituary and an appreciation were published in the *Gentleman's Magazine*.<sup>58</sup>

Whitaker is a fine example from a relatively small class of gentry who underpinned the authority of government. These gentlemen were the guardians of culture and religion and believed they held together the social fabric in a turbulent world. For twenty-two years, from 1793, Britain was at war to check Napoleon's European ambitions and hold off the virus of revolution. Economic dislocation and high taxation were two of the chief domestic scourges which had an impact on all levels of society. At the same time, the acceleration of manufacturing so evident in the textile areas of East Lancashire and West Yorkshire, where Whitaker lived, added a new dimension to the stresses of war. To Whitaker, it must often have felt that the barbarians were again at the gates of Rome.

To his contemporaries, he seemed to be endowed with many of the virtues which preserved Rome. Greatest admiration was reserved for his writings and the variety of his literary skills, which included those of biographer, moralist, bard as well as historian. His erudition, which spanned the classics, the church fathers, contemporary theology, history and languages, was quite remarkable. He was praised, too, for his courageous leadership during the riots and threats of sedition which swept across Lancashire between 1817 and 1820. Within the church, he was recognised as a good leader. He was responsible, within the parish of Whalley, for twenty-four dependent chapelries. This meant huge patronage in making appointments. His policy was described as ‘pure and disinterested’ and there is no evidence to the contrary. His ‘episcopal superintendence’ was exercised wisely and chiefly by means of a regular round of preaching in each chapelry in turn. On all fronts he was a civilising influence, frail but brave, eloquent but sincere, and, above all, devoted and loyal to his close friends, family and dependants. It was as well he did not live to see the victory of the barbarians.

<sup>55</sup>. Whitaker, *Whalley*, 4th edn, I, p. xlix.

<sup>56</sup>. *Gentleman's Magazine* (April 1822), p. 312.

<sup>57</sup>. Whitaker letters 7.

<sup>58</sup>. *Gentleman's Magazine* (1822), part 1, pp. 83 *et seq.*

## THE ALMSHOUSE EXPERIENCE IN THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY WEST RIDING

By Helen Caffrey

*Almshouse foundation increased during the nineteenth century in the West Riding. These residential charities shared essential characteristics, variously expressed, in terms of accommodation and gardens, residence criteria such as gender and age, and benefits, regulations and responsibilities, constituting an almshouse package. Founders and trustees were concerned with selection, property maintenance and pension payments. Beneficiaries, who were carefully selected, were numerically few compared to workhouse inmates, but embodied a particular approach to the care of the elderly poor in which independence was facilitated within a community setting.*

Almshouses: The word brings to mind a particular and distinctive type of building, but how accurate is this image and how far does it go in the understanding of almshouse charities?

### INTRODUCTION

The elderly poor have not been well treated by historians. While other social and occupational groups have attracted study, they have been largely excluded.<sup>1</sup> Neither have almshouses been comprehensively investigated. The few historians to investigate medieval establishments bemoan their neglect.<sup>2</sup> Post-Reformation, and following W. K. Jordan's work in 1959,<sup>3</sup> the situation becomes even bleaker. Perhaps this reflects a wish to distance oneself from a close and distasteful contemplation of needy old age or, conversely, the emotive attraction of that 'new initiative', the workhouse. Yet the evidence does not justify this neglect, especially in the light of current concerns over social housing and an ageing population. Almshouse charities offer a wealth of experience and varied models. By their nature almshouses incorporate specific functions — although these may not be uniform — alongside statements, conscious or unconscious, about the place of charity in the community and the status of providers and recipients. The elderly poor seldom speak to us directly before the use of oral testimony yet they have always been a part of society and, when government welfare provision was available, became major recipients of it: poor relief and the old age pension.

At this point it seems appropriate to define almshouses and almshouse charities, as terminology may have contributed to misconceptions. Medieval, or pre-Reformation hospitals embraced a range of care for a plethora of needs, ranging from the medically specific leper hospital (lazar house) through to hostel accommodation for travellers to the corrodiess and chantries denigrated by religious reformers. By means of corrodiess

<sup>1</sup> P. Thane, *Old Age in English History* (Oxford, 2000).

<sup>2</sup> Rotha Mary Clay, *The Medieval Hospitals of England* (London, 1909); N. Orme and M. Webster, *The English Hospital, 1070–1570* (Yale and London, 1995).

<sup>3</sup> W. K. Jordan, *Philanthropy in England, 1480–1660* (London, 1959).



retired retainers might inhabit grace and favour apartments, while at chantries nominated pensioners (bedesmen) might pray for the souls of the deceased. The elderly poor might be found among these objects of charity and the term ‘hospital’ was generally applied to accommodation provided for them as well as to schools and orphanages, although the latter usage soon declined for new foundations. Shades of these earlier hospitals can still be discerned in some nineteenth-century almshouses while the association with schools also persisted, as many sixteenth- and seventeenth-century foundations, and some few later ones, were joint charities. The trend for classification and greater specialisation in the nineteenth century led to a closer identification of a hospital with the care of the sick, although the term continued to be applied in official reports, alongside that of almshouse, to residential charities for the elderly.<sup>4</sup>

It is important to recognise the visible, almshouse building, as the structural component in charitable provision for the elderly poor. This aspect, while significant in defining needs and the way in which they were met, was part of a holistic approach. Residents received not only the benefit of rent-free, maintained accommodation, but (usually) an accompanying pension which might include some essentials in kind, notably fuel. While the particular extent and value of this support varied between charities and over time, the outstanding common factor was permanence. Other charities which might offer help to the elderly, among others, consisted largely of doles: annual, or sometimes more frequent, distribution of food, clothing or cash. Recipients in these cases might be regular beneficiaries, but there was no security in expectation of support. Almshouse residents might be seen, with very few exceptions, to have achieved a permanent and final status. Even this is only part of the almshouse concept, as envisaged by philanthropic founders and applied by successive groups of trustees, and only part of the almshouse experience, in the sense of the way of life of the residents. In these two areas appear, paradoxically, an impressive generosity tempered by contemporary notions of the ‘deserving’; and a way of life which might be tightly circumscribed but experienced amidst circumstances of comfort and security well beyond previous or peer expectation. Ultimately, amidst a wealth of individual and sometimes idiosyncratic practice, a persistent concept would seem to have held good.

After the surge of individual and corporate charitable foundations of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries,<sup>5</sup> and the eighteenth-century proliferation of philanthropic societies,<sup>6</sup> the New Poor Law of 1834 and the Poor Law Unions and their workhouses offered a more universal and institutional response to the problems of poverty and destitution.<sup>7</sup> While the wider scene — economic and intellectual — is beyond the scope of this study, it is within this context that individual and local charity not only continued

TABLE 1: Number and foundation date of almshouses charities

Foundation date	1800–1900	Nineteenth-century refoundations	Pre-1800 foundations extant 1900	Total listed by the Charity Commissioners in the 1890s
Number of charities	34	3	75	112

<sup>4</sup>. This usage is found from the eighteenth century.  
<sup>5</sup>. Jordan, *Philanthropy*; W. K. Jordan, *The Charities of Rural England, 1480–1660* (London, 1961).  
<sup>6</sup>. B. Kirkman Gray, *A History of English Philanthropy* (London, 1905).  
<sup>7</sup>. D. Owen, *English Philanthropy 1660–1960* (Harvard and Oxford, 1964).

TABLE 2: Erection date of nineteenth-century almshouses extant 2002

Erection date	1800–39	1840–79	1880–1901	Total for 1800–1901
Buildings extant 2002	6	20	15	41

Note: Some nineteenth-century almshouses foundations are now in more recent premises, or no longer survive as residential charities. Surviving nineteenth-century buildings include some rebuildings for earlier foundations.

but increased. Within an era increasingly conscious of the need for facts and statistics on which to base social policy, combined with the concern for public, physical and moral health apparent in the provision of improved worker housing and model communities (often, but not always, associated with nonconformity), almshouses offered a tried and tested approach.<sup>8</sup>

This form of charity persisted throughout the nineteenth century. Its attraction to philanthropists and its specific perceived role appear in official reports and local references, as well as in distinctions made by contemporaries between almshouses and work-houses. Numerically, the former catered for a fraction of the intake of the latter, but their value and focus ensured not only the continuity of many earlier foundations but also a massive commitment to rebuilding and refurbishment, and a striking increase in foundation through the latter half and towards the end of the nineteenth century. How far the characteristic features of West Riding almshouse charities identified here are paralleled by or differ from those in other parts of the country remains unknown until similar comprehensive surveys are undertaken. This study, considering in turn buildings, residents and people in charge, indicates something of the diversity and continuity of the almshouse tradition, as found in the nineteenth-century West Riding. It should be said, too, that almshouses are not solely a historic phenomenon. Perhaps the most heartening feature of this investigation, at least from a personal point of view, was observing the current vigour of the concept, exemplified by residents, trustees and staff.

Much of the following material comes from the charities' minute and account books in Yorkshire archives and in the possession of present trustees. Constitutions, finances and some short histories and descriptions, with occasional evaluative comment, were recorded and published following the Charity Commissioners' inspections, first in 1837, and then more fully in the five volumes of *The Endowed Charities of England and Wales, County of York, West Riding*,<sup>9</sup> issued from 1897 to 1899, arising from their investigations in the mid-1890s. The Commissioners' concern lay with the proper management and use of funds, in so far as possible in accordance with the founder's intentions (on the principle of *cy pres*) and in avoidance of further high profile scandals on the lines of St Cross at Winchester, the basis of Trollope's novel, *The Warden*,<sup>10</sup> in 1855. They were not concerned primarily with maintaining or establishing standards or producing evidence as a platform for social policy, although elements of both appear in their work, affording a view of informed opinion and contemporary assumption on the nature of welfare in the 1890s. In addition to the documentary material, a large proportion of nineteenth-century alms-house buildings survives, although often much altered internally. A few are now used for other purposes, while in some instances renewal occurred in the twentieth century, producing a further chapter in almshouse development.

<sup>8</sup>. Gillian Darley, *Villages of Vision* (London, 1975); Jack Reynolds, *The Great Paternalist* (London, 1983).  
<sup>9</sup>. All quotations are from the Charity Commissioners' reports unless otherwise stated.  
<sup>10</sup>. Anthony Trollope, *The Warden* (London, 1855).



BUILDINGS

What would the nineteenth-century traveller in West Riding have seen in the way of almshouse building and, further, how would he or she have identified the function of the buildings? In the absence of a Defoe, Michelin or Pevsner of the period, town histories such as Fox’s *History of Pontefract*, or walking guides such as Banks’s *Walks in Yorkshire* and *Walks about Wakefield*, offer occasional comment, but more often on the historic or curious.<sup>11</sup> On his visit to the eighteenth-century Fountain’s hospital at Linton, Banks observed that ‘the pretentious building is nearly all front and not at all suitable’, while the large-scale rebuilding of Archbishop Holgate’s Hospital at Hemsworth in 1858 drew his critical attention for shoddy workmanship. More will be said about this later.

The most frequently encountered almshouse consisted of a single-storey row of about half a dozen one- or two-room cottages, each with individual front door and tall chimney, set in a garden. Building materials were local, brick or stone, but with some detailing, for instance in lintels or string course, marking these as superior to run-of-the-mill dwellings. The row might be defined by projecting or gabled end units and dignified by a central pediment or other decorative feature. Function might be further identified by a tablet recording name, date and possibly circumstances of foundation. These premises were most likely to be found in the centre of a village or town, although a suburban location became increasingly common in an industrialised city (Fig. 1).

The traveller who was invited inside most likely found a substantial fireplace and oven, coal- or wood-fired, cupboards or shelves to either side, with the rest of the room occupied by two chairs and a small table and an iron bedstead. A lean-to scullery might be found at the back, with water drawn from a common pump, while toilets and fuel store formed a discreet block to the rear, amidst more garden and drying-ground.

Probably two-thirds or more of the almshouses built during the nineteenth century — as well as many surviving earlier ones — fitted this pattern with only superficial differences, as almshouses reflected contemporary architectural fashion, moving from Classical to Gothic or other more eclectic styles. Alongside this core tradition, others might be found with equally respectable almshouse antecedents, in some cases self-consciously recalling aspects of their medieval origins. These almshouses might comprise ornate, two-storey ranges set about a courtyard, accommodating two dozen or more elderly people (Fig. 2). These images are drawn from the writer’s survey of surviving almshouse buildings of the period across the county, which sought to identify and quantify characteristic features of the genre. Some of this may be seen in Tables 3–5.

TABLE 3: Original number of accommodation units in almshouses extant 2002

Size, units	Small 2–6	Medium 7–11	Large 13+
Number of buildings	18	12	11

TABLE 4: Layout of nineteenth-century almshouses extant 2002

Layout	Courtyard	Row	Other
Number of buildings	7	31	3

<sup>11</sup> G. Fox, *The History of Pontefract* (Pontefract, 1827); W. S. Banks, *Walks in Yorkshire* (Wakefield, 1862); W. S. Banks, *Walks about Wakefield* (Wakefield, 1871; repr. Wakefield, 1983), especially pp. 324–26.

TABLE 5: Height of nineteenth-century almshouses extant 2002

Height	Single-storey	Two-storey
Number of buildings	27	14

While there is some evidence to suggest that prospective almshouse builders looked at existing examples, no blueprint has been found, nor was any ideal model apparently in circulation. The journal *The Builder* featured a number of almshouses between the 1840s and 1870s, giving a detailed commentary on the rebuilding of the Printers’ Company’s London almshouse and mentioning the double quadrangle almshouse planned by Sheffield master cutler, Mark Firth, in 1867, but without recommendations for wider implementation.<sup>12</sup> Samuel Smiles’s *Thrift* cites Akroyd’s and the Crossley family’s projects for their workers but makes no mention of provision for those past work.<sup>13</sup> Pugin offered an idealised vision of social housing in his *Contrasted Residences of the Poor*,<sup>14</sup> setting a medieval monastic establishment against a workhouse drawn on the lines of Bentham’s 1798 panopticon. While more functional designs for a workhouse were put forward following the 1834 Poor Law<sup>15</sup> this romantic medievalism did exert some architectural influence, although specific origins are less easy to attribute.

More pragmatic is a consideration of how the buildings worked, how they differed from other contemporary housing, and in what way their design suited the needs of elderly, and possibly frail or disabled, residents. What deductions can be drawn as to perceptions of needs and extent of care from this material evidence? Single-room, single-storey units might be viewed as sensible, low-maintenance accommodation, avoiding problems of stairs and the risk of falls, predecessors of the old peoples’ bungalows of the mid-twentieth century. While these might be genuine and positive aspects for the residents, it would be rash to impart such motivation to the design. An assumption of status might be more significant: the poor have few possessions and single people (or occasionally couples) need even less than a family. Accessibility was not a universal consideration as almshouses at Holmfirth, built in 1860, and Pledwick, built 1885, could be reached only by steep flights of steps.

Two-storey almshouses, which form one third of the sample, are likely, though not invariably, to be found among the ‘superior’ dwellings — that is, more expensive in construction and decoration and planned on a larger scale — such as Joseph Crossley’s in Halifax (1863) and the Tradesmen’s Home at Lilycroft, Bradford, built in 1875. Other circumstances might lead to a classification of the provision at Lilycroft as ‘superior’, but those in Halifax could claim to be miniature houses — one up, one down, single depth, self-contained, of comparable room size to many urban terraces, with the added dignity of a separation of sleeping from living accommodation. Less ornate two-storey buildings were erected in Selby for the Audus and Feoffee almshouses in 1822 and 1833 and in a compact row at Martha Walker’s almshouses in Leeds in 1883. First floor apartments were rare, present in the Cotton Horne almshouses in Wakefield, rebuilt in 1901, and resembling rather the charitable tenements of the Peabody Trust.

Where it has been possible to take internal measurements and original layout has not been obscured by later alteration, rooms have been found to range from 14 ft 6 in. by

<sup>12</sup>. *Builder* (1867), p. 396.  
<sup>13</sup>. Samuel Smiles, *Thrift* (London, 1877), Chapter ix, pp. 206–17.  
<sup>14</sup>. A. W. N. Pugin, *Contrasted Residences of the Poor* (1841; repr. Leicester, 1973).  
<sup>15</sup>. K. Morrison, *The Workhouse — A Study of Poor Law Buildings in England* (London, 1999).



15 ft 6 in. (4.35 x 4.65 m.) for Joseph Crossley's two room accommodation, with the upper room open to the roof, to Hemsworth's suite of 8 ft by 10 ft (2.4 x 3.0 m.) living room with window bay, 7 ft by 15 ft (2.1 x 4.5 m.) bedroom and 4 ft by 8 ft (1.2 x 2.4 m.) scullery. Single room accommodation, for instance at Carlton, Almondbury, or St Mary Magdalene in Ripon, was generally about 12 ft by 15 ft (3.6 x 4.5 m.) up to 16 ft square (4.8 m.) with a small scullery attached. No correlation was found either with date of building or additional facilities. Within this house, essential furniture might allow little space for movement. The bed was most often the stumbling block, an iron bedstead being both heavy and cumbersome. In the almshouses at Hemsworth, the residents found cold winters a particular problem as there was insufficient space to light the bedroom fire.

Basic furniture was provided in a number of places, either at the behest of the founder as at both Crossley almshouses in Halifax, at Eleanor Hirst's in Wilshaw (1861) and at Marsland's in Wakefield (1886), or subsequently on the decision of the trustees. Furnished accommodation could be a boon, but it also had health and hygiene implications. At Harrison's in Leeds, residents were specifically forbidden to supply their own beds. This aspect of provision was not consistent between charities, and more may remain unrecorded. At the other end of the spectrum, Elizabeth Rand (1876) stipulated that residents should bring their own furniture on entering her almshouses in Bradford and that it should be available for her inspection, an intention that may have proved impracticable.

In terms of the utilities, a piped water supply to each house was unusual before the last decade of the century. Its presence was noted by the Charity Commissioners on their visit to Jenkinson's almshouses in Leeds in 1895, while Stephen Nicholson's at Roundhay had just been connected to the corporation supply, at a cost of £35. The old common pump still stands at Selby, although these houses were on the town mains by the 1890s, while the rebuilding of Waddington Hospital in 1893 included a mains supply as part of the modernisation programme. Residents at the much older Beamsley Hospital near Skipton were delighted when the neighbouring landlord generously extended the piped water supply from his estate: the effort of operating the pump had been a strain for the less vigorous. An adequate water supply could be an issue for the larger establishment and was an important factor in relocating the almshouses at Hemsworth in 1858 when 'the Master had satisfied himself by actual borings and other evidence of a plentiful supply'.<sup>16</sup> Here the trustees' minute books record the installation of a replacement pump in 1872 and a cistern to store soft water from the roofs, but in 1899 the supply was condemned and connection to the mains was made in the following year. By this time water supply and sanitation were subject to inspection and provision at Holbeck, and Waddington also fell foul of the regulations.

Toilets were provided in the usual form of a block of privies behind the houses. Where structures or plans survive, as for the Crossley almshouses and at Holroyd's in Huddersfield,<sup>17</sup> it would seem that facilities were generally shared by two or at most three residents. Only at St Anne's in Ripon (rebuilt 1869) was an indoor toilet recorded, and it is not clear how this functioned in the context of the back-to-back design of these almshouses. At the medieval Fawkes' foundation in Otley the dilapidated premises offered no sanitation at all, while at Worril's at Crigglestone (shortly to be replaced) 'close to the houses at one side there runs a foul open drain, coming from the neighbouring cottages, which must be a constant source of danger to health'. The least satisfactory aspect was likely to be access. A large proportion of almshouses were built without back doors,

<sup>16</sup> West Yorkshire Archive Service [WYAS], Wakefield, C 345/1/1, Archbishop Holgate's Hospital Collection.

<sup>17</sup> WYAS, Kirklees, KC 627/3/1.



necessitating a walk round the end of the row or range, although a central passage might be incorporated as at Waterhouse Smith's at Cawood (1839) and the Melbourne almshouses in Bradford (1845). Again, this might be customary, but the residents of Joseph Crossley's almshouses in Halifax found it sufficiently inconvenient, or unsafe, to request lighting along the pathway.<sup>18</sup>

Indoors, the substantial fireplaces within closely-grouped and solidly-walled houses provided a cosy environment, despite the majority of floors being stone flagged and liable to sweat or rising damp. Damp was observed by the Charity Commissioners in a number of old almshouse buildings and occasionally in more recent ones, such as Lydia Freeman's (1839) near Sheffield, which are built against rising ground. At Collingwood's in Bentham it was found that 'the upper rooms are unwholesome and imperfectly ventilated . . . and fireplaces are needed'. These were rebuilt, in their present single-row, single-storey form, five years later. Little information has survived on cooking arrangements. Yorkshire ranges were in use at Joseph Crossley's almshouses into the mid-twentieth century, while the first woman trustee at Mary Potter's in Leeds, Miss Kitson, battled for over a decade to get outdated ranges replaced.<sup>19</sup> Dependence on solid fuel for heating and cooking, all year round, accounts for the provision of fuel stores and for supplies of free fuel at many almshouses. However it has not been possible to calculate exact allocations as documents tend to refer generally to 'a cartload at Christmas', without indicating volume or whether this was in common or individual. Nettleton's at Almondbury, rebuilt 1863, Waterhouse Smith's at Cawood, Aberford, Carlton, Wilshaw and probably more supported residents in this way.

Perhaps the biggest difference, at least for urban residents, lay outside rather than within: external space. Almost all almshouses had gardens. The most common form, for a row of houses, was a strip at the front where each resident might have some flowers and an individual space to sit in the sun, alongside a common pathway. Numerous examples remain, at Thornton-in-Craven, Sedbergh, Almondbury, the Ripley almshouses in Bradford and Smith's almshouses in Wakefield among others, ranging in date from 1815 to 1887. A bigger, walled garden usually lay behind the houses, available for individual vegetable and fruit cultivation. Written records have little to say on almshouse gardening. James's Hospital at Cawood had 'gooseberry gardens' while the founder of the other almshouse in the same town specifically commended residents to keep their gardens in good order, 'distinguished by great neatness and nice order', and here the front plots are longer than usual. At Aberford (1844) regulations stipulated collective cultivation to support a more collegiate way of life, whilst acreage would imply enthusiastic and able-bodied residents! In a rare interview with residents, the Charity Commissioners visiting Ripon in 1820 were told that the almswomen of St Mary Magdalene grew potatoes. The seed was sown by one of the [Arch]bishop's employees on their behalf, but on an area of roadside waste, rather than a contained garden. At the old almshouses of Barnes Hall, Ecclesfield, founded in 1630, small gardens enabled residents to 'support themselves to some extent on the produce'.

All this clearly depended on the level of physical fitness of the ageing residents. The trustees of Hannah Rawson's Hospital at Wadsley minuted their decision in 1892 to discontinue the six separate plots because of problems of maintenance and themselves took on the provision of a shared flower garden and lawn<sup>20</sup> (Fig. 1). Where architects' drawings were made, some more formal, park-like layouts took shape and these were

<sup>18</sup>. The Trustees of Joseph Crossley's Almshouses, Halifax.

<sup>19</sup>. WYAS, Leeds, Mrs Potter's Hospital, uncatalogued.

<sup>20</sup>. The Trustees of Hannah Rawson's Hospital, Wadsley.





Fig. 1. Hannah Rawson's Almshouses at Wadsley. Photograph: R. Glenn.

carried out, with some adaptation, at Joseph Crossley's and at the most upmarket almshouses, John Abbott's Trustees Ladies' Homes (1886), also in Halifax, where a lawn and landscaped shrubbery were created.<sup>21</sup> At the Bradford Tradesmen's Home a central lawn is surrounded by a pathway from which individual gardens run up to each house. Do the bootscrapers by each door imply individual cultivation? If so, this was most probably decorative rather than productive, and a resident gardener was employed (Fig. 2). One exceptional function of an almshouse garden may be mentioned: at Caleb Crowther's almshouses in Wakefield the founder was buried on site in 1849. A mortuary was proposed at Hemsworth, but this reminder of mortality never left the drawing board.

Why were gardens — requiring work and continuous maintenance — seen as an essential and integral part of an almshouse, even in urban locations with pressure on land for building? In the case of a courtyard plan, a central seating area — a place of quiet, peace and rest, but not solitude — might appear an obvious use of space. It might also bring to mind medieval hospitals, cloistered monasteries and college quadrangles, associated functionally with a different and more communal way of life. However this clearly does not provide an explanation for the majority of almshouses which were built in rows. Were the virtues of self-sufficiency and useful activity paramount or was it rather a modern recognition of the healthy values of fresh air and ventilation, the lack of which was found so injurious in urban courts and back-to-backs?

In the present era of garden archaeology perhaps almshouse gardens will attract some attention. One feature to be expected would be the post holes where poles supported

<sup>21</sup> WYAS, Halifax, Misc. 703/15.





Fig. 2. Bradford Tradesmen's Homes. The Trustees of Bradford Tradesmen's Homes.

washing lines, behind the almshouse in the interests of discretion and decency. The regulations at Elizabeth Rand's stated that there should be 'no clothes hung out to dry in front of the almshouse'<sup>22</sup> while at the Gascoigne almshouses at Aberford washing might be pegged out only on days chosen by the matron, possibly separating male from female laundry.<sup>23</sup> Few other almshouses were as strictly regulated as these two, but it may be recalled that Titus Salt tried to exclude a display of drying laundry from the streets of Saltaire. To expedite the laundry process the trustees at Hemsworth in 1866 approved the expenditure of up to £40 on a mangle house for their twenty residents.<sup>24</sup>

Finally, in terms of premises, some almshouses incorporated other buildings. Whilst it was not unusual for charitable bequests to establish more than one institution, as in the instance of Dr Crowther who planned a fever hospital in addition to the almshouses, it was only in the case of school and almshouse that buildings were liable to be combined. This was the case at Popple's, founded 1832 at Ovenden, and Nicholson's in Leeds (built by 1837), while at the rebuilt Waterhouse charity in Halifax (1848), the school was placed centrally with the accommodation for the elderly on either wing. Once school boards offered alternative provision after 1870, these schoolrooms were generally emptied, being either subsumed into the almshouse or used as accommodation for Sunday School and less frequent parish activities. Dual usage was not always popular and in the much older Frieston Hospital at Kirkthorpe the presence of loudly singing Sunday School scholars was much resented.<sup>25</sup>

22. WYAS, Bradford, B 363.

23. WYAS, Leeds, L 2379.

24. WYAS, Wakefield, C 345/1/3.

25. WYAS, Wakefield, Warmfield Parish, C 547/4/1/3.



In a few cases the almshouse included some communal space for the residents' use: a kitchen at Thornton-in-Craven (1815) for the five residents, kitchen and dining room for the eight at Aberford (1844) and clinic and dispensary for the thirty residents of rebuilt Waddington in 1893. Freeman's Hospital had a reading room as its central feature, although how this worked is not clear, while four nineteenth-century foundations included chapels: one Church of England, one essentially Methodist (Firth's at Sheffield) and the other two inter-denominational nonconformist. The religious dimension will be considered later; meanwhile it may be noted that in the few almshouses where they occur chapels are given architectural prominence. They do not, however, render the almshouse a religious building, although services and meetings may have offered a communal focus for the residents.

## PEOPLE

Who were the residents? The majority were women, widows aged from the mid-sixties to early-eighties, local and 'respectable', without other means of support. Admission criteria, laid down by the founder and subsequently applied by the trustees, might be more or less specific. At twelve nineteenth-century foundations provision was for women only, and no new male-only almshouses were founded, while the majority were for men or women with an increasing number of places for couples. In the case of couples, either both were designated almspeople, as at Saltaire (1868), or one only (the number of pensions being limited) although the survivor might expect to continue in her own right. At Frank Crossley's almshouses the Charity Commissioners found nineteen women and six men, five of whom were accompanied by their wives. In a few instances there were separate male and female allocations. At Bentham, before the 1901 rebuild, there were two facing rows, one for men, one for women; at Aberford men were accommodated to one side of the central entrance, women to the other. Concern over the proprieties is implied in the new arrangements at the rebuilding of the old College and Hospital of Sir Robert Knollys in Pontefract in 1859. Earlier accommodation with a shared common room was replaced by two wings, each with its own single-sex common room.

The preponderance of women may reflect more than population statistics. Custom and practice may have influenced selection, or self-selection. This is implied at Cawood, where 'it is said to be an accident that there are no men or married couples at present in the almshouse, but it does not appear that single men have ever been appointed'. A similar situation occurred in Selby, where the Feoffee Square almshouses were a female establishment but the twin Audus almshouses, open to both sexes, were also inhabited by women. There is a suggestion that elderly women either were, or were perceived as, better able to cope with independent living than men. This underpins Booth's figures in *The Aged Poor in England and Wales* for paupers which show twelve per 1000 women and fourteen per 1000 men in receipt of poor relief during their working years, rising dramatically to eighty-eight and 208 respectively at age seventy and 103 and 273 at age eighty, as numbers surviving declined. Booth noted, in assessing the relative opportunities for care in the community in Sheffield, that 'aged women can get casual work' charring, washing, sewing, nursing 'but old men past work are few, killed off by the heavy character of iron and steel working, grinders' disease, lead colic, phthisis and intemperance. Women are happier, more use, less in the way'.<sup>26</sup> Occasionally gender roles might be allocated

<sup>26</sup> Charles Booth, *The Aged Poor in England and Wales* (London, 1894; repr. New York, 1980), pp. 42-43, pp. 120-21.



within the almshouse. At Aberford the women were expected to do all the laundry, the men all the outdoor chores.

In addition to gender, marital status is implied by the term 'widows'. At Sedbergh the almshouse, founded by Thomas Palmer in 1848, was known as the Widows' Hospital, while trustee records often appear to use the term synonymously for the residents. Registers, where surviving, indicate that some were certainly spinsters, who might be expected to have fewer family members to support them, so that 'widow' may be more of a courtesy title. Lack of family support, as well as personal indigence, was a prerequisite for entry into an almshouse. However, willingness or ability of family members to support the elderly might be subject to varied interpretation and the Charity Commissioners quoted Mrs F. P. Smith at Sylvester's Hospital in Ecclesfield who 'has an intimate acquaintance with the working of the almshouses' and stated that 'almswomen are appointed whose relatives profess to be unable, and are apparently unable, to support them, but who nevertheless are carried away to their homes by the same relatives in case of serious illness for months at a time, leaving their houses unoccupied and untended'. While priorities might differ, there was no system of support for the resident who needed nursing or became unable to manage alone.

Minimum age was usually specified and most often a threshold of fifty-five or sixty was set, but fifty-five might be reduced to forty-five for disabled applicants at Caleb Crowther's, fifty was the minimum for spinsters with no age stated for widows at Ovenden, and forty-five was the minimum at Thornton-in-Craven, where it was hoped that the youngest might care for older residents. At the Crossley almshouses, where Frank and Joseph used very similar constitutions, the minimum age was stated as seventy-five reduced to sixty where an appropriate medical certificate was supplied. By the latter part of the century admission criteria became more formulaic, and while individual stipulations and quirks were not eliminated, the Charity Commissioners' influence becomes apparent. This was exerted in the form of new Schemes (instruments of government) applied to charities which needed their permission to buy or sell property or raise a loan in order to extend or rebuild. New Schemes did not utilise a model constitution, which might have threatened the principle of *cy pres*, but they were concerned with clarity and effective governance. Occasionally it is apparent that a new founder has borrowed an existing almshouse constitution, as at Firth's and the Crossleys', both nonconformist. It is perhaps surprising that this did not happen more often.

However, compliance with criteria of age, gender and poverty in no way guaranteed a place. A vacancy was likely to arise only on the death of a former resident, and census returns and the few individual registers surviving — including those recorded on tablets of stone at Saltaire — show that almshouse residents had a tendency to longevity. Would-be applicants seldom put themselves forward. Level of literacy or confidence in letter-writing may have been factors, but it would seem that applications, at least before the 1890s, were often made through the intervention of a third party, frequently the local minister, who might himself be one of the trustee body responsible for making appointments. When applications outnumbered vacancies, trustees had to prioritise. An element of subjectivity as regards the founder's intentions and applicant's suitability may have entered these proceedings. At Hemsworth, applicants were called for interview in the boardroom — surely an intimidating experience.<sup>27</sup>

Local residence was generally specified in the founders' criteria, varying between, commonly, five and ten years, with the locality often defined as the parish but in other cases more colloquially, reflecting local custom and sense of identity. Letters of application

<sup>27</sup> WYAS, Wakefield, C 345/1/43.



to Mary Bellamy's almshouse in Rotherham stress not only residence but long-term family connections with the town. 'My husband was well known to most of the important men in the town, who will be pleased to further my interest' wrote his widow, Emma Syddall, in 1904; both father and grandfather of Evelina Dawson were named as 'old Rotherham residents'.<sup>28</sup> By the turn of the century more applications were made directly, supported by references, and at some places such as Marsland's, Firth's and Harrison's at Pledwick, printed forms were in use. In a few cases a closer connection might obtain between applicant and foundation, such as estate tenant at Carlton or employee at Rand's or Eleanor Hirst's. An occupational bias might also be indicated, as for cutlers at Hollis's in Sheffield or miners in Wombwell, both major forms of employment for their areas. However these seem to have been 'first choice' rather than exclusive categories.

There is some indication that a distinction in favour of the 'deserving poor' was made in a large number of almshouse charities and that this became more widespread — or the habit formally acknowledged — over the period. This classification is not clear-cut, and, indeed, may not have been precise or uniform at the time. It might embody elements of occupation and local standing as well as behaviour and circumstance. Few registers give occupations for residents or their spouses before the beginning of the twentieth century. Apparent changes in former occupation may reflect other local economic change such as availability of industrial employment or agricultural decline. At Aberford, where former servants and estate workers were first choice, by the 1890s residents included the widows of farmers, miners, quarrymen and masons, while male residents included both farmers and farm labourers. Yet even in 1922 the trustees expressed a preference for those 'in the service of the gentry'.<sup>29</sup> At Hemsworth registers show mainly agricultural workers and their widows, with miners not becoming the majority until the 1910s.<sup>30</sup> In 1898, women residents included the retired postmistress and former school teacher. The latter had been supporting herself by sewing, until her health declined: an instance of falling on hard times. After the death of the postmistress it was rumoured that she had left a large sum of money, whereat the charity demanded reimbursement.<sup>31</sup>

The applicants to Mary Bellamy's almshouse in the first decade of the twentieth century included women who had run a small business, such as a bakery or corner shop. One application was accompanied by a supporting letter from the relieving officer. Walter Parkin wrote to the almshouse trustees in 1910 to draw their attention to Miss Dawson's case, 'a most pitiful and pathetic one' as she 'had to ask the Guardians to help her to eke out a miserable existence on the small pittance they can only allow her' although she is 'undoubtedly a lady and therefore I have every confidence' in asking for consideration. Her own account describes the situation of the unmarried daughter caring for elderly parents and on their death losing her home while her own health deteriorated.<sup>32</sup> Her application demonstrates not only need but social status and the way in which the authorities might work together. In small communities co-operation was particularly likely to occur, as those taking on the role of trustees were liable to be those making decisions on poor relief, as well as landlord or past employer.

Miss Dawson had a strong case not only because of her current circumstances, but because she had come down in the world, and through no fault of her own. This preference for residents who found themselves 'in reduced circumstances' in old age appears frequently in the Charity Commissioners' reports of the 1890s, for instance at Holmfirth

<sup>28</sup>. Rotherham Archive and Local Studies Section, Rotherham, 167/T2/1.

<sup>29</sup>. Goodchild Collection, Wakefield.

<sup>30</sup>. WYAS, Wakefield, C 345/1/20.

<sup>31</sup>. WYAS, Wakefield, C 345/1/6.

<sup>32</sup>. Rotherham Archive and Local Studies Section, Rotherham, 167/T2/1.



and Sedbergh. This may have been, or become, a criterion for selection — although only rarely stated by the founder as at Rogers' in Harrogate (1868). It may also reflect an interest on the part of the Commissioners. Some signs appear earlier in the century, as in the 1828 report on the practice at Hemsworth where 'due regard is paid to the character and merits of the candidates, and in general the choice falls upon persons who have been reduced in their circumstances through misfortune, but the only qualification required is that the candidate should be upwards of sixty years of age when admitted to the hospital, and this is strictly adhered to'. This almshouse was subject to a new Scheme in 1857 which stated that 'the electors [sub-committee] are on each occasion to choose the best qualified and most deserving applicant' and residence was again mentioned. The foundation was prosperous and by 1894 it was observed that 'the trustees, in view of the comparatively large stipend payable to the brothers and sisters [almshouse residents], do not select them from the poorest class'.

Another way to assess suitability was through church attendance. One who had regularly attended the local church, or in some cases the nonconformist chapel, was likely to be deemed respectable, and also a recognised member of the community, visible to its higher echelons. Frequent inclusion of the local minister among the trustees, sometimes the one perceived by colleagues as having local knowledge and more direct responsibility, may have reinforced this dimension. There was no common pattern here. While Hannah Rawson and Elizabeth Wadsworth expected their beneficiaries to belong to the Church of England, Major Barker stated that 'no person was to be considered ineligible or considered a less deserving object on account of religious opinions'. However at Sedbergh the trustees were required to check every widow's certificate of legitimate birth, Church of England baptism, and obtain a certificate from the vicar attesting regular attendance. These widows were 'always to have been of chaste, sober, upright and moral character'. Respectability was an important facet for those potential recipients of the accolade of charitable funding, who would also be living in close contact — and ideally on good terms — with neighbours of a similar sort. While admission criteria might prefer or require church attendance this was less often cited among regulations for the residents. Piety and a strict denominational adherence may have been important in a few cases, although amongst the four almshouses which included their own chapel (Table 1), Joseph Crossley's did not stipulate regular attendance, leaving selection of preachers to the residents. Their religious affiliations were noted in 1894 as Methodist 23, Congregationalist 20, Baptist 4, Episcopalian 1.

The deserving status of the applicant might also be assessed financially. The bottom line was the person's inability to support himself or herself, but in many, but by no means all, cases a further distinction was applied whereby those in receipt of poor law relief (unless temporarily due to ill health) were excluded. Charity could not be granted to those already in receipt of benefits. There was also an issue over the parish attempting to duck its responsibilities by offloading on to the charity. At Hemsworth a form of benefits trap developed as 'persons who would otherwise be in receipt of such relief will struggle on without it for the purpose of preserving their qualification for election, and these persons are not always the deserving cases'. However a very different situation might occur where an almshouse was poorly endowed and was unable to offer any or a remotely adequate, pension. At Nettleton's and Holroyd's it was accepted as essential that residents should receive relief, and this point was clearly made by the trustees to the Commissioners. At Clarkson's in Ferrybridge, an early foundation able to provide only minimal pensions, although applicants in reduced circumstances and not in receipt of relief were said to be preferred, in practice relief was received, while the parish carried out repairs on the almshouse in order to maintain a community facility. At Thornes no



pensions were available at the Corporation's almshouse, 'so that the probability is that the almswomen are in receipt of Poor Law relief, but on this point the corporation make no enquiry'. A new Scheme instituted at Rawmarsh in 1894 stated that no relief should have been received for three years previously and 'no doubt the overseers will review these cases now that stipends have been so largely increased' (to 5s. per week). The significance of endowment and pensions will be discussed later.

But just how popular were almshouses? Rate of foundation and statistics for poverty in old age are indicators of need, not necessarily of demand. Flow of applicants seems to have varied considerably, reflecting the facilities offered, the location and other options. Anecdotal evidence suggests that brand-new buildings attracted an increase in application for modern accommodation and a waiting list might arise. At Joseph Crossley's almshouses — one of four in Halifax — some would-be residents waited for seven to ten years for a place. At Waddington, where attention to the utilities after previous condemnation by the Rural Sanitary Authority led to the installation of hot and cold water and bathrooms, there were generally three applicants for every place available, and earlier rules on residence within the designated parishes had to be tightened.<sup>33</sup> Location of the almshouse could be significant. At Almondbury the area covered by the terms of the foundation led to some heart-searching by the trustees after relocation to the village centre in 1863. Despite the central situation and improved, two-room, accommodation, it proved difficult to attract 'persons resident in the remoter parts of the township to leave their friends and local associations to come and live at Almondbury, alone and without pensions'. Almshouse charities were not care homes able to provide nursing in illness or such practical day-to-day support as fetching shopping. The importance of local association is indicated in Sheffield where the eighteenth-century Hollis's Hospital had been overtaken by industrialisation in the form of 'low class residential property' and 'breweries and iron works'. Official surprise was expressed that the residents 'who are for the most part natives of Sheffield, made no complaints, and appeared well pleased with their respective homes'.

By the later part of the century, and possibly earlier, almshouses which were poorly maintained and dilapidated buildings offering inadequate or no pension, were struggling to fill vacancies. At Beamsley residence declined as beneficiaries treated their pensions as out-pensions, preferring to live in less-isolated circumstances in Skipton, although the situation was partially redressed by some modernisation. At Frieston Hospital, an all male foundation, problems also occurred, compounded of the quality of accommodation, other use of the premises, low pensions, and a location no longer central to the catchment area. On the other hand, the parallel female establishment of Sagar's Hospital did not experience the same problems, while the extent of local feeling and 'community ownership' apparent in the 'singular revelations' of the local press make any certain attribution of causes and motives inadvisable.<sup>34</sup>

## FOUNDERS, TRUSTEES, STAFF AND FINANCE

The role of trustees in selecting almshouse residents is apparent, guided by foundation deeds or constitutions acting as individual mission statements. But what sort of people chose to found an almshouse? Of the thirty-seven nineteenth-century foundations, nine were established by women, nineteen by men, and nine by groups. Often substantial figures in their community, founders might be employers, landowners, businessmen who

<sup>33</sup>. M. Bridge, *Waddington Village Life in the Nineteenth Century* (Settle, 1994), pp. 142–55.

<sup>34</sup>. WYAS, Wakefield, C 547/4/1/3, Warmfield Parish.



had settled in the area and wished to contribute to it, or professional men. The Gascoigne sisters were local landowners, as was Major Barker, also an employer, who built on his estate. Frank and Joseph Crossley, together with their brother John, provided civic buildings, worker housing, an orphanage and a park as well as the two separate sets of almshouses. Titus Salt included almshouses for retired workpeople and residents in the later phase of Saltaire, opposite the hospital and dispensary, and originally also adjacent to it: the only part of his town to incorporate an open space.<sup>35</sup> In Harrogate, the retired Bradford businessman, Mr Rogers, provided almshouses primarily for those who had been in business, but less successfully than himself; the bee motif on the building is a reminder of industry in a secluded setting. Joseph Smith had a successful career as a London banker before returning to his native Thornton-in-Craven with his wife Rachel. At Sowerby, Elkana Horton's decayed almshouses were rebuilt in 1861 when Colonel Rawson purchased the estate and chose to take on board the care and financial responsibility for the almshouse residents.

Dr Caleb Crowther was a distinctive character, author of *Observations on the Management of Madhouses*, senior honorary physician at the Pauper Lunatic Asylum in Wakefield and a successful GP for half a century.<sup>36</sup> He had no children and left a considerable sum to charity. He also wrote an *Open Letter to Future Trustees* in 1839 — a rare occurrence in providing some explanation of his reasons for choosing this form of philanthropy and providing for nonconformists whom he saw as excluded by mainstream charities.<sup>37</sup>

The circumstances which contribute most to a formulation [sic] then are education habit and mode of life. The fellow of a College or Schoolmaster, intending to devote money to charitable Purposes, would most probably dispose of it to promote education. The Minister would devote it to building Chapels and missionary purposes, and the medical man to establishments for the relief of the sick. . . .

Considering Insanity as one of the greatest evils to which humanity is liable, my first project was to build an asylum for admitting Tradesmen, or that class of people who are just above paupers either gratuitously or on very poor terms. The difficulties attending the Management of such an Institution caused me to abandon it in despair . . .

Some years ago an honest and industrious old man, whom I had known for thirty years, having been reduced to Poverty by a large family, disease, and age, applied to me to speak to his character, for the Purpose of obtaining an Alms House or Harrison's Charity. He was asked by the official person to whom I applied if he was a churchman. He replied that he was accustomed to go to the Methodist Chapel, but that lately for convenience he had gone to Church in the Evening. He was told that there was no vacancy at present . . .

Some founders took an active role in the early life of their almshouse, selecting the design, arranging endowments, choosing and visiting the residents. The Gascoigne sisters, unusually only in their thirties at the time of foundation, designed some of the furniture and decoration; Joseph Crossley visited residents and took a close personal interest in his charity for the five years before his death, and subsequent members of the family maintained the connection. Several almshouses were created in memory of a deceased family member: Rachel Smith on behalf of her husband at Thornton-in-Craven, Edward and Hannah Ripley's son on their behalf at Bowling Dye Works in Bradford. Eleanor Hirst's plaque at Wilshaw forms a memorial to her only child: 'These almshouses were erected by Eleanor the beloved wife of Joseph Hirst of this place in loving remembrance of Mary their deeply lamented and only child whose love and sympathy for the poor when living makes these houses intended for the aged and destitute a fitting memorial to an affection-

<sup>35</sup>. Reynolds, *Great Paternalist*, p. 278.

<sup>36</sup>. Dr Caleb Crowther, *Observations on the Management of Madhouses* (London, 1838).

<sup>37</sup>. Goodchild Collection, Wakefield.



ate daughter who was always ready to add comfort to those in want and declining years'. However, the majority of almshouses were founded late in life, often by will, leaving design, construction and further detail to the executors or trustees. If oral instructions had been given or intentions and preferences expressed, these remain unrecorded.

While the West Riding has only one example of corporate almshouses founded for specific occupation groups (the Bradford Tradesmen's Home), more often encountered in London, in ports and in the north east, some almshouses were collective foundations. The Holmfirth Monumental almshouses were erected as a memorial to the catastrophic flood of 1852 when the dam broke on the Bilberry Reservoir. The generous response to a national emergency appeal left a surplus to which was added the remarkable sum of £1000 raised by a local ladies' bazaar, and the total enabled a committee of the seven Holme valley districts to set up the charity. At Holbeck in Leeds, the almshouse was set up after a public appeal as a memorial to an explosion tragedy.

Occasionally the almshouse was set up by the township as a replacement for an earlier, defunct or decaying, foundation. At Wombwell, the Victoria Almshouse succeeded Hunshelf's in 1888; at Crigglestone another seventeenth-century charity was replaced by the Victoria Memorial in 1901, while at Horbury the former Wormald's was overtaken by St Leonard's (named for the nearby church) in 1888, as the result of an appeal. The local authorities may already have been supporting earlier, under-funded charities, and capitalised on jubilee fervour to provide more satisfactory facilities.

But in the large majority of cases, the founder's wishes were left to others for interpretation, raising a question as to the extent of intervention by unknown builders, architects and lawyers. Certainly the collective will of the trustees is apparent where the rebuilding of an existing almshouse was concerned. This was demonstrated structurally at Waddington, where a courtyard with additional accommodation and facilities replaced the old row, itself an accumulation of earlier additions, and at Hemsworth, where two rows replaced an earlier one, with gatehouse and chapel, but without the communal dining facility envisaged by the founder. Trustees might also find themselves responsible for drawing up the minutiae of admission criteria and regulations for residents, more or less formally, as well as subsequently implementing them. A relaxed attitude in this respect was observed by the Charity Commissioners with some disfavour, and flexibility of practice might be restricted if a new Scheme was introduced.

Trustees might come from similar backgrounds to founders, and initially belong to their circle of friends, neighbours and associates. In some cases trusteeships were intended to be hereditary, but in practice this could be unworkable. Trustees needed to maintain local connections and, although attendance at meetings was seldom onerous, absentee trustees placed a heavier burden on those on the spot and could lead to unquorate meetings. Some trustees chose to appoint a clerk, both to take the minutes and deal with correspondence and sometimes other matters between meetings. The vicar might take this role, occasionally the schoolmaster (where a joint charity was involved) or responsibility might devolve on the agent of a landowner's estates. As the century progressed there was a trend to pay an honorarium, and to appoint a clerk from a solicitor's office, gaining a regular channel for legal and possibly financial advice, although this would not necessarily obviate legal fees. Financial expertise was relevant in dealing with the investments on which endowments might be based, and the beleaguered trustees of the Frieston Hospital must have been happy to have banker Percy Tew amongst their number.

Trustees ideally were local, caring and realistic, well-informed and able to contribute some continuity to their charity. The vicar — in the sense of the position rather than the individual — was appropriate as a permanent fixture in society. By the latter part of the century local councils also offered the desired combination of continuity and local



knowledge and their representatives appear more frequently during the 1880s and 1890s. In some cases a more active role was taken and at Pontefract nine out of the ten almshouses, founded from the middle ages to the eighteenth century, were amalgamated as one charity in 1884, supporting about fifty residents. This approach became popular for larger authorities with a number of small charities seeking support, and received government encouragement in the mid-twentieth century.

Essential duties for trustees included managing the charity's finances, maintaining the property and paying pensions. Endowments supporting almshouse charities might be based on income from land or property owned by the charity, or, increasingly often, from railway stock, and by the latter half of the century commonly invested in low risk consols (consolidated government stock, generating an interest of around 3 per cent). Where land and property were involved, the trustees as landlords were responsible for upkeep as well as income, whilst these and other investments could fluctuate in value, in tune with the economy. The charity's main financial commitments were residents' pensions, any rates or insurance premiums for which they were liable, and repairs and maintenance. Sufficient funds and prudence might enable a charity to separate these categories, retaining a reserve fund for unexpected repair bills. In practice, this was seldom possible, leading to crisis management when outgoings exceeded income. Occasionally the opposite occurred, and the newly rich charity could choose to increase pensions, increase the number of almshouse places by extending buildings, or simply sit tight. This last course was liable to excite unfavourable comment for depriving the rightful objects of the charity. The Charity Commissioners sought to help and advise trustees in regulating their finances, although such advice was not always well received or put into practice.

Pensions depended upon several factors. The founder might have named a specific sum, or given a minimum or maximum figure, allowing some flexibility. The charity's ability to pay pensions was another matter again, reflecting current income from the endowment and competing demands for maintenance, as well as the trustees' approach to finance. In some instances, pensions seem to have fluctuated in the manner of a dividend, in others consistency was maintained. When cash-strapped charities had to decide between pensions and repairs, other finance might be sought, as at Wadsley where a local appeal was launched after the bank failed.<sup>38</sup> Alternatively, other charities might be applied to, or acceptance of poor relief by the residents may have bridged the gap.

Figures show considerable variation, pensions averaging, on the whole, 4s. to 6s. per week over the second half of the century. However the cash pension needs to be seen in context, and individual differences render comparison uncertain. At Thornton-in-Craven, the pension increased from 3s. to 3s. 6d. while the £2 for coal rose to £10, accompanied by the equivalent of £10 per annum in clothing for the five residents. At Earby, founded 1874, 4s. 6d. was received per week with an unknown quantity of fuel, while at John Scott's in Leeds, founded 1891, a 5s. minimum was set by the founder and poor relief excluded. At Sedbergh an age differential applied: the 5s. per fortnight rose to 7s. at age seventy. Separate rates might apply for couples, singletons or two sharing: men received an extra 6d. on their pension at Wilshaw. At Pledwick, pensions increased to a generous 10s. per week in 1894, in new up-to-date accommodation. Other pensions were based on annual amounts. At Selby this was approximately £8.18s., at Ovenden around £6. At Freeman's £10 was expected to cover a resident's contribution to repairs and maintenance, although in practice the trustees took responsibility. At Cawood, £5 was clearly not enough, and was 'augmented to a small extent by doles from other charities', while

<sup>38</sup>. The Trustees of Hannah Rawson's Hospital, Wadsley.



increased income at Mary Potter's allowed annual pensions of £20 to be paid by the 1890s.

In a number of cases the small pension was not intended, or expected, to be adequate. At Marsland's almshouse in Wakefield, the weekly 1s. 6d. available to dissenting 'poor deserving females' was to be supplemented by the residents, who were required to specify means in their application. At Holmfirth 'preference is given to those who have a little money of their own' to add to the weekly 3s. When the township's new almshouses were built at Wombwell in 1888, admission criteria included a 'permanent income, duly secured, of not less than 5s. per week'. As a preference was given to members of the West Riding Miners' Permanent Relief Fund Friendly Society, that body may have been the source of the weekly 5s. Despite the key nature of long term funding for the longevity of the almshouse, a few nineteenth-century foundations omitted any pension provision, notably Holroyd's in Huddersfield, founded 1830, and Holbeck, founded 1835.

The extent to which trustees, or some of them, were involved in day-to-day running of their almshouses would reflect time and inclination, but in some cases resident staff were employed. This was more likely at larger establishments, although there is no consistent correlation with size. Four nineteenth-century foundations included staff: matron and domestic help at Aberford, a porter at John Abbott's, the secretary of the Tradesmen's Benevolent Fund and a gardener at Bradford Tradesmen's, and a reader at Firth's in Sheffield. The latter post, preferably held by a member of the Methodist New Connexion, included preaching, visiting residents especially in sickness, acting as clerk to the trustees and 'no other occupation without [their] consent'. Clearly this was intended as a full time post, not a sinecure. Earlier foundations which included a 'master' continued to do so, with some disparity in terms of duties and status. The recreated Archbishop Holgate's Hospital employed a porter and matron — a husband and wife appointment at an annual salary of £50, on a par with a similar post at the workhouse. At Frank Crossley's almshouses in Halifax, one of the residents could take on the role of caretaker for a small payment, and there may have been more such instances, unrecorded. Another trend towards the end of the century was in medical care, apparent from subscriptions to nursing services and annual payments to a nominated doctor.

But at far the larger number of almshouses, residents were expected to be able to look after themselves. In other words, the means of continuing independence were supplied, not the support of a nursing home. In a very few cases residents were recorded as being transferred to hospital or the workhouse, but trustees showed great reluctance to take this step, and some residents must have struggled on when no longer able to care adequately for themselves or their accommodation, as, indeed, they would have done if able to afford to keep themselves elsewhere, without supporting relatives or neighbours.

## THE ALMSHOUSE PACKAGE

What can be said of a common experience of almshouse life and the way in which it was perceived by residents and outsiders? It has been shown that in spite of the physical features which generally distinguish almshouses and make them readily recognisable, the diversity of style also reflects contemporary, local and individual tastes and choices, and possibly funds. Is this visible exterior related to quality of provision within, and to the rest of the support package? An elaborate façade may be a statement of self-satisfaction by the founder and a monument to counter mortality. Money may have been lavished on the superficial which could have been devoted to facilities for the residents or an extension of the number of places. While this would not be peculiar to the nineteenth century, no consistent pattern of any sort between appearances and provision has been



found in this investigation. Neither is it the only way in which such a statement might be read. It speaks of the importance of care for the poor and the elderly and its place within the community. The almshouse might also confer transferred status on its residents, living with dignity and regarded with respect.

In return for home, pension and physical and financial security, something might be expected of the residents. Almshouse life might require compliance with regulations laid down by the founder. Extent and detail here varied considerably, while extent of implementation remains largely unknown. Some restrictions might, from a latterday perspective, be viewed as restrictions on personal liberty, although to a contemporary they might seem in line with other relationships, with landlord or employer, offset by a greater degree of security and permanence. The essentials were care of the property, decency and neighbourliness. At Earby it was stipulated that 'each of such widows so far as in her power lay should attend to her companions during illness'. The trustees of Hannah Rawson's almshouses at Wadsley found five basic rules sufficient. Elsewhere there might be duties for residents, such as the care of grounds or common pathways. Some earlier foundations maintained individual duties, such as the ringing of the bell at Featherstone on the approach of a funeral cortège from Purston Juglin, and the 'poor widows or ancient maids' at Barber's almshouse at Barugh continued to 'instruct the children of the township in reading, knitting and sewing', but few nineteenth century foundations required exertion from their residents, other than gardening as already mentioned. An embargo on employment was common, and concomitant with terms for admission.

Church attendance might be required, unless residents were ill or unable to walk that far. Five of the nineteenth-century foundations unequivocally specify church once or even twice on Sundays. Admission criteria may have led to a good rate of attendance, although there are no statistics to set this in a national perspective. As always, intention and practice might diverge. James Waterhouse Smith expected his beneficiaries to attend the reformed or established church at either Cawood or Wistow (the catchment area for the almshouse), yet the Charity Commissioners observed ambiguously that this was not enforced, but all did attend. At the popular Quaker foundation at Thornton-in-Craven, no attendance was specified and 'no question is asked as to the religious opinions of the applicants'. On the other hand, at Stephen Nicholson's almshouse (1837), residents were required to attend the nearby church at Roundhay and 'not to attend the worship of other denominations of Christians or other religious bodies'. However, observations by the Charity Commissioners suggest that strict rules tended to lapse after foundation, especially where there was no mechanism or interest in enforcement. At Wadsley the Church of England residents were simply expected to be 'willing and desirous' of attending church.

Another common requirement was residence. This might appear to be superfluous, but was found desirable to safeguard the charity from abuse whereby almshouses were left empty and pensions treated as outpensions (which were also available from some almshouse charities). Likewise, other residents — relatives, lodgers or hangers-on — were forbidden, although occasionally recorded. Companions or carers might be welcomed after appropriate representation was made to the trustees. However, almshouse residents did sometimes take holidays, perhaps a week's stay with relatives or friends at some distance, and such requests for absence were sanctioned by trustees, and may be recorded in the minutes. There may have been a feeling that many such trips were inappropriate for people in need of an almshouse, but a system of notification also provided some security for residents: untoward absence would not go unnoticed.



Earlier foundations might employ a curfew, generally from about 10 p.m. to 7 a.m., with some adjustment for daylight hours, but by the nineteenth century this was less usual. Whether this is understood as restriction or security, it is hard to see how it could have been enforced without a resident member of staff or where the building took the form of an enclosed courtyard with a lockable gate, and a designated keyholder. In practice, good neighbourliness may have been the most important factor for smooth running of the almshouse. Residents of the Melbourne almshouse were to be 'kind and obliging to the neighbours' and those at Sedbergh were to 'render to each other in an affectionate and sisterly spirit and manner all needful assistance, comfort and society'. The nature of a contiguous existence and any shared facilities could readily lead to irritation without some degree of co-operation or at least tolerance.

Disagreements seldom reached the written record and then only if a formal complaint were made or a thorny problem concerned the trustees. Trustee minutes do occasionally record a decision that a resident should be 'spoken to', and if more than one warning did not avail, that the person should leave. Tantalisingly, the details of unsuitable behaviour are discreetly omitted. At Hemsworth the minutes for 1883 recorded permission for Ann Higgins to share her home with 'a trustworthy relative responsible for her behaviour' as she had disregarded an earlier warning about drunkenness.<sup>39</sup> At Wadsley, Mrs Burton [sic] was warned about cleanliness in 1895 and in 1900 the trustees decided that she should 'be written to to put her house in order forthwith', but she was still there when she died in 1905.<sup>40</sup> At Ackworth trustees dealing with a particularly intractable case told the Charity Commissioners that they were unaware of their right to evict, but inertia and humanity might be equally involved. Although almshouse constitutions commonly contained a clause giving trustees the right of expulsion, it was very much a last resort.

Such problems were internal ones. How were the almshouses and their residents seen within and without their community? If buildings were readily recognisable, should the same be said of the residents? Hewitt recalled in his *History and Topography of the Parish of Wakefield* in 1862 that 'I saw one of them lately in Wakefield Corn Market . . . great crowds of people continually surrounded him in the street, so novel to them was his appearance'.<sup>41</sup> This Hemsworth 'brother' would have been wearing his blue coat with yellow cuffs and silver arm badge. Distinctive clothing enabled the charity's beneficiaries to be identified and in some way seen as its representatives. But no nineteenth-century foundations included this feature, preferring to commute existing clothing provision to a cash payment as part of the pension. Where uniform was retained, its wearing became more restricted, as 'Sunday best' or for special occasions. Whether or not uniform was considered appropriate, the provision of durable clothing of reasonable quality could be seen as another form of support. The minutes for 1862 and 1864 at Hemsworth record an expenditure of £10.8s. for four newly-elected 'brothers' and a payment of £1. 6s. 4d. to the dressmaker for making up four dresses.<sup>42</sup> At Holroyd's, the parallel clothing charity was available to almshouse residents as to others within the district of Fartown.<sup>43</sup> By the twentieth century, uniform was more often seen in a negative light, as a stigma of charity rather than a badge of pride, and by the time of this survey, almshouse uniforms were no longer worn at all within the West Riding, and worn at very few almshouses elsewhere in the country. Occasionally features of almshouse design were shunned by those in the neighbourhood: the future residents of Akroydon said 'no' to dormer windows four years

<sup>39</sup>. WYAS, Wakefield, C 345/1/4.

<sup>40</sup>. The Trustees of Hannah Rawson's Hospital, Wadsley.

<sup>41</sup>. J. Hewitt, *History and Topography of the Parish of Wakefield and its Environs* (Wakefield, 1862), p. 154.

<sup>42</sup>. WYAS, Wakefield, C 345/1/3.

<sup>43</sup>. WYAS, Huddersfield, S/HC Box 115/6/7.



after the erection of the Gothic gabled almshouses on the periphery of Frank Crossley's estate.<sup>44</sup>

Almshouse residents might also be visible, collectively, by their presence in church on Sundays. In some places pews were reserved for them: a gesture of accessibility and status within the community. Another form of celebration took place if the founder's birthday was commemorated, as at Harrison's in Leeds and Joseph Crossley's, with an annual treat and get-together for residents and trustees. Activities might include a sermon, an outing, and generally featured a substantial meal. At Waddington this took place at the Buck Inn where almshouse residents, friends and supporters were photographed in holiday mood (Fig. 3). In some charities the trustees held an annual dinner after the successful compilation of the annual accounts, and expenditure on food and ale was recorded in the minutes. At Long Preston the new Scheme of 1850 allowed £6 for 'dinner for the said governors, their tenants and guests at the half-yearly audit' while the pension for the same period was £6.10s.; however by the 1890s the pension had increased and the hospitality budget was down to £2.10s. But only a small proportion of almshouses, usually the larger ones, organised such formal occasions. Almshouse residents may have taken an identifiable part in community and parish activities, but the record remains to be found, while as individuals they would have chosen their interests and pursuits as would other elderly poor people. Almshouses were not closed institutions.

## CONCLUSION

What may be said overall of the almshouse experience in the nineteenth-century West Riding? In the first place, it was restricted to a small number. A total of about 580 places were available at any one time in the 1820s, increased by an additional 430 due to new foundations by the mid-1890s. If no vacancies existed, the total number of residents would have been more, as spouses or carers were included where these were acceptable within the terms of the constitution or at the discretion of trustees. The likelihood of obtaining a place was in some ways a lottery as the distribution of almshouses, and the number of places within them, bore no relationship to population, particular need, or necessarily to demand. Grindleton, five miles from Waddington, offered eight to ten places, yet overlapped with it in catchment area, for a relatively small and scattered rural population. Sheffield and Leeds both had large early foundations, extended and joined by new ones in the nineteenth century, but not in proportion to the rapid rise in population and industrial poverty. Bradford was late to enter the scene and then each of its four almshouses had further restrictions in admission criteria. As individual charities, the distribution of almshouses reflects that of philanthropists and their resources, their choices and sympathies.

The continual (and increasing) trend in almshouse foundation indicates its acceptance not only as an area of need but one where individual contribution still could and did make a difference. This contribution was firmly located, whether in urban or rural context, within the particular community. Within this the almshouse had a perceived role and the residents a particular status appropriate to the dignity of age, respectable working lives despite hard times, and sheer survival value. They were favourably circumstanced compared with their peers in the workhouse. As an enclave within its locality, the almshouse had a particular and unique role in its ability to suit provision to needs without segregated institutionalisation, demonstrated by the small groupings of demarcated units, and the independence expected of the residents. Almshouse charities were

<sup>44</sup>. Darley, *Villages of Vision*.





Fig. 3. Waddington Hospital residents and friends celebrating. The Trustees of Waddington Hospital.



Fig. 4. Residents at Beamsley Hospital. *Craven Herald and Pioneer*.



not only precursors of the old age pension but provided models of quality care for twentieth century welfare provision for the elderly. As organisations they show an impressive ability to survive, adapt and develop.<sup>45</sup>

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1: ALMSHOUSES MENTIONED IN THE TEXT

Aberford, *Gascoigne Almshouses*, founded 1844  
 Ackworth, *Mary Lowther's Hospital*, founded 1741  
 Almondbury, *Thomas Nettleton's Almshouses*, founded 1613, rebuilt 1863  
 Beamsley, *Beamsley Hospital*, founded 1593, built by 1630s  
 Bentham, *Collingwood's Almshouses*, founded 1726, rebuilt 1900  
 Bradford, *Melbourne Almshouses*, founded 1845  
 Bradford, *Rand's Almshouses*, founded 1876  
 Bradford, *Ripley Almshouses*, founded 1857, rebuilt 1881  
 Bradford, *Bradford Tradesmen's Home*, founded 1875  
 Carlton, *Carlton Almshouses*, rebuilt 1901  
 Cawood, *James's Hospital*, founded 1723  
 Cawood, *Waterhouse Smith's Hospital*, founded 1839  
 Crigglestone, *Victoria Memorial Almshouses*, rebuilt 1901  
 Earby, *Crowther's Charity*, founded 1874  
 Ecclesfield, *Barnes Hall Hospital*, founded 1630  
 Ecclesfield, *Sylvester's Hospital*, founded 1693  
 Featherstone, *Bead House*, founded 1613  
 Ferrybridge, *Clarkson's Charity*, founded 1699  
 Grindleton, *Mary Brown's Almshouses*, founded 1860  
 Halifax, *John Abbott's Trustees Ladies' Homes*, founded 1886  
 Halifax, *Frank Crossley's Almshouses*, founded 1855  
 Halifax, *Joseph Crossley's Almshouses*, founded 1863  
 Halifax, *Nathaniel Waterhouse Charity*, founded 1642, rebuilt 1848  
 Harrogate, *Rogers' Almshouses*, founded 1868  
 Hemsworth, *Archbishop Holgate's Hospital*, founded 1555, rebuilt 1858  
 Holmfirth, *Holmfirth Monumental Almshouses*, founded 1860  
 Horbury, *St. Leonard's Hospital*, rebuilt 1888  
 Huddersfield, *Holroyd's Almshouses*, founded 1830  
 Kirkthorpe, *Frieston Hospital*, founded 1595  
 Kirkthorpe, *Sagar's Hospital*, founded 1558, rebuilt 1766  
 Leeds, *Harrison's Hospital*, founded 1653, rebuilt 1849  
 Leeds, *Holbeck Almshouse*, founded 1835  
 Leeds, *Jenkinson's Hospital*, founded 1643, rebuilt 1806  
 Leeds, *Stephen Nicholson's Almshouses*, founded 1837  
 Leeds, *Mary Potter's Hospital*, founded 1728, rebuilt 1850  
 Leeds, *John Scott's Almshouses*, founded 1891  
 Leeds, *Martha Walker's Almshouses*, founded 1883  
 Linton, *Fountain's Hospital*, founded 1721  
 Long Preston, *Long Preston Hospital*, founded 1613, rebuilt 1859  
 Otley, *Fawkes' Charity*, date unknown

<sup>45</sup> A lot remains to be done in further research. The writer intends to publish a directory of West Riding almshouses, containing foundations from after the Reformation up to the twentieth century. So that this may be as comprehensive as possible readers are invited to write in, care of the YAS, with any information on almshouses within the county. Subsequently it is hoped to extend the geographical area and continue investigations into the twentieth century. Meanwhile the help and encouragement must be acknowledged from almshouse residents and trustees who have welcomed the writer into their homes and given up their time with enthusiasm.



Ovenden, *Wadsworth's or Popple's Almshouses*, founded 1832  
 Pledwick, *Harrison's Homes for the Aged Poor*, founded 1885  
 Pontefract, *Almshouse and College of Sir Robert Knolles or Trinities*, rebuilt 1859  
 Rawmarsh, *Goodwin's Charity*, founded 1743, rebuilt 1894  
 Ripon, *St. Anne's Hospital or Maison Dieu*, rebuilt 1869  
 Ripon, *Hospital of St. Mary Magdalene*, rebuilt 1875 and 1890  
 Rotherham, *Mary Bellamy's Almshouses*, founded 1781, rebuilt 1897  
 Saltaire, *Salt Hospital*, built 1868  
 Sedbergh, *The Widows' Hospital*, founded 1848  
 Selby, *Audus and Feoffee Square Almshouses*, founded 1833 and 1822  
 Sheffield, *Firth's Almshouses*, founded 1869  
 Sheffield, *Freeman's Hospital*, founded 1836  
 Sheffield, *Hollis's Hospital*, founded 1703  
 Sowerby, *Elkana Horton's Almshouses*, founded 1728, rebuilt 1861  
 Thornton-in-Craven, *Joseph Smith's Almshouses*, founded 1815  
 Waddington, *Waddington Hospital*, founded 1701, rebuilt 1893  
 Wadsley, *Hannah Rawson's Almshouses*, founded 1840  
 Wakefield, *Major Barker's Homes*, founded 1887  
 Wakefield, *Cotton Horne's Almshouses*, founded 1646, rebuilt 1901  
 Wakefield, *Caleb Crowther's Almshouses*, founded 1838  
 Wakefield, *Marsland's Almshouses*, founded 1886  
 Wakefield, *Smith's Almshouses*, founded 1887  
 Wakefield, *Thornes Corporation Almshouses*, founded 1853  
 Wilshaw, *Eleanor Hirst's Almshouses*, founded 1871  
 Wombwell, *Victoria Almshouses*, rebuilt 1888

#### APPENDIX 2a: MANUSCRIPTS, LISTED ALPHABETICALLY BY ALMSHOUSE

*John Abbott's Trustees Ladies' Home*: WYAS (Halifax), Misc. 703/15, drawings  
*Mary Bellamy's Almshouses*: Rotherham Archive and Local Studies Service, 167/T2/1, applications  
*Joseph Crossley's Almshouses*: Trustees' Archive, plans and drawings  
*Caleb Crowther's Almshouses*: Goodchild Collection, Wakefield, letter and memorabilia  
*Frieston and Sagar's Hospitals*: WYAS (Wakefield), C547/4/1/3 cuttings and correspondence, including Wakefield Free Press  
*Gascoigne Almshouses*: WYAS (Leeds), L2379 rules; Goodchild Collection  
*Archbishop Holgate's Hospital*: WYAS (Wakefield), C345/1/1, 1/3, 1/4, 1/6, minutes; C345/1/20, register; C345/1/43, application procedure  
*Holmfirth Monumental Almshouse*: WYAS (Huddersfield), WYK1086/1/1–1/6, foundation  
*Holroyd's Almshouses*: WYAS (Huddersfield), KC 627/3/1, plan; S/HC Box 115/6/7, foundation, pensions and clothing charity  
*Nettleton's Almshouses*: WYAS (Huddersfield), KC 643/2/1, 2/2, accounts; KC 644, plan  
*Mary Potter's Hospital*: WYAS (Leeds), awaiting cataloguing, minutes and accounts  
*Rand's Almshouses*: WYAS (Bradford), B363, regulations  
*Hannah Rawson's Almshouses*: Trustees' Archive, minutes  
*Waddington Hospital*: Trustees' Archive, accounts and photographs

#### APPENDIX 2b: PRINTED SOURCES

Bradford Tradesmen's Benevolent Association, *Annual Reports* (Bradford, 1915–1999)  
 Charity Commissioners, *Reports of the Commissioners in pursuance of Acts of Parliament, 58 Geo iii c91, 59 Geo iii c81, and 5 Geo iv c58 to enquire concerning Charities and Education of the Poor in England and Wales, vol. xl*, (1837)  
 Charity Commissioners, *Endowed Charities: comprising the reports made to the Charity Commissioners subject to the provision of the Charitable Trusts Act 1853 to 1891 together with the reports on those endowments of the charities from enquiries concerning charities 1818–1837, vols 1–5, County of York, West Riding* (1897–1899)  
*The Builder*, 1847–1887

## OBITUARIES

### JOHN GILBERT HURST FBA, FSA, DUniv (1927–2003)

John Hurst, one of the founding figures of medieval archaeology and co-instigator and director of the long-running excavations at the deserted medieval village of Wharram Percy in North Yorkshire, died aged 75 on 29 April 2003 from injuries sustained in a violent attack by thugs some weeks before.

Born in Leicestershire, Hurst read Archaeology and Anthropology at Cambridge and first worked as an archaeologist in Yorkshire as a student on Professor Sir Grahame Clark's excavations on the Mesolithic settlement at Star Carr. His interest in medieval archaeology stemmed from excavations he directed for the Cambridge Archaeological Field Club at Northolt Manor, Middlesex, helped by, amongst others, the Society's Past President Dr R. M. Butler. As he began post-graduate research at Cambridge he started to explore possibilities for studying deserted medieval villages through excavation. This led to an historic meeting at Wharram with Maurice Beresford, then a lecturer in History at the University of Leeds, who was himself cutting trenches through the site, though with no experience of archaeological practice. From this meeting Beresford, Hurst, Hurst's Cambridge friend Jack Golson and others set up the Deserted Medieval Village Research Group which over a number of years systematised historical and archaeological research into medieval rural settlement in England. They continued excavations at Wharram Percy for 40 consecutive summer seasons, forging methods and approaches now widely used for the study of the rural historic environment, and producing a series of reports, still in progress of publication, relating to the archaeology of the site. The project is widely regarded as a model. The Wharram excavations were done entirely by voluntary labour and several generations of archaeologists, including many now working in Yorkshire, received formative training and experience there.

Hurst's professional career began within a year of graduation with appointment to the Inspectorate of Ancient Monuments in the Ministry of Works and he remained with the state service until his retirement as Assistant Chief Inspector at English Heritage in 1987. Travel in connection with his work gave him an unrivalled opportunity to visit and evaluate medieval village sites and he was acquainted with most of those now known in Yorkshire, as over the rest of England. A visit to a Yorkshire example then being excavated by a schoolboy, now the Society's current President, allowed Hurst to identify a potential recruit for medieval archaeology whom he systematically nurtured. He identified others as he went about organising archaeological rescue excavations as part of his responsibilities with the Inspectorate. By systematic support and patronage he created from them a cadre of experienced medieval archaeologists who between them more or less defined the new discipline of medieval archaeology. Amongst them was the Emeritus Professor of Archaeology at the University of York, Professor Philip Rahtz. Hurst presided over the exponential growth of rescue archaeology in England in the 1970s and in the 1980s tried to establish a comprehensive archaeology service for the country though in the event government policy decreed another solution.

Hurst's constant travels enabled him to become the national expert of his generation on medieval and post-medieval ceramics, especially those imported from Europe. He worked with Jean Le Patourel, Stephen Moorhouse and others to define the Yorkshire



ceramic sequences as he did similarly with other scholars in other regions. A founder of the Society for Medieval Archaeology, the Society for Post-Medieval Archaeology and the Medieval Pottery Research Group, he was President of all three, and Vice President of the Society of Antiquaries. Elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1987, he was awarded an honorary doctorate of the University of York in recognition of his contributions to Yorkshire and national archaeology in 1995, and the medal of the Society of Antiquaries, presented posthumously, in 2003.

## RICHARD LUMLEY, 12th EARL OF SCARBROUGH (1932–2004)

Lord Scarbrough, who became a patron of the Society in 1972, died on 23 March 2004 at the age of 71. Educated at Eton and Magdalen College, Oxford, he followed his father in a military career first with the 11th Hussars and then the Yorkshire Dragoons, serving as ADC to the Governor of Cyprus and Commander-in-Chief there in 1956. He succeeded his father to the earldom of Scarbrough in 1969, served as Honorary Colonel of the 1st Battalion of Yorkshire Volunteers (1975–88), and was appointed a Deputy Lieutenant of the West Riding in 1973, Vice-Lord Lieutenant of South Yorkshire in 1993 and Lord Lieutenant in 1996. From 1984 to 1993 he was President of the Northern Area of the Royal British Legion. He also inherited from his father, who has been First High Steward of York Minster, a commitment to the history and culture of his native county. He served the town of Rotherham well for many years and had a particular interest in historic buildings, notably Roche Abbey and his own home, not far away at Sandbeck Park, on the family history and architecture of which he could talk with authority and wit. He was also a trustee of the Leeds Castle foundation. For seven years from 1985 he was President of the York Georgian Society, and in 1994 was appointed a member of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts. As a patron of the Society he promoted its welfare, attending events in aid of the library appeal and, only shortly before his death, agreeing to be patron of the current appeal for the improvement of Claremont. He leaves a widow, the Countess Elizabeth whom he married in 1970, and three children.



## ANTHONY LAUGHTON PACITTO (1931–2003)

Tony Pacitto was a great character and a remarkably versatile archaeologist: excavator, photographer, air-photographer, geophysicist and metal detectorist. His grandfather emigrated from near Monte Cassino, in Italy, and established an ice-cream business in Middlesbrough, where Tony was born. But his parents separated when he was young and he was brought up in Helmsley by his mother and her parents. On the maternal side he was related to other famous Yorkshiremen, actor Charles Laughton and Prime Minister Harold Wilson.

A chance visit to York introduced Tony to Peter Wenham and archaeological excavation which was to play a major role in his subsequent life. He helped his great friend Raymond Hayes with excavations at the Ryedale Windypits and first worked with me in 1956 — the start of a 40-year partnership and a close lifelong friendship. In the next couple of decades he worked on large-scale excavations all over the country and directed several excavations on his own account: at Ferrybridge, Rudston (Sheepwalk), Pockley, Clay Bank, Casten Dyke and Rudland Close. Tony was skilled at all things electrical and mechanical, so ideally suited for the excavation of the massive Roman well at Rudston where he directed the excavation, organised shoring and scaffolding and had a complex switchboard to manage the lighting and a series of pumps. He discovered the Roman villa at Beadlam, co-directing excavations in 1969 and taking sole charge there between 1972 and 1977.

For a while in the 1960s Tony tried to settle down to a salaried post, as a technician in the Department of Archaeology at Leicester University, but life in the city and regular hours were not for him. And conventional archaeology, digging and recording, was never sufficient of a challenge. At first he achieved variety through photography and worked as site photographer on many excavations. Then in the 1970s he turned to aerial photography and became one of the leading exponents in the field, supplying the National Monuments Record with a vast number of photographs of sites, mainly in eastern Yorkshire. Tony co-directed many excavations with me, in Yorkshire, southern England and France: his wise balanced advice, great sense of humour and amazing ability to think laterally were perfect antidotes to the stresses of a large excavation. His vast range of talents were in constant demand though applied only in his own sweet time.

Tony added geophysics to his portfolio and operated a gradiometer, used to great effect following John Dent's excavation of cart burials at Wetwang Slack — the first opportunity to test the reaction of the gradiometer to Iron Age tyres in the field. As a result, working first from his air photographs, Tony was able to locate other cart burials, two of which were excavated at Garton Station and Kirkburn. He developed an automatic recording device to operate with the gradiometer and carried out a series of extensive surveys. In 1990 he was faced with a different challenge, attempting to find Iron Age hoards at Snettisham, Norfolk. Of course he was successful, and the greatest hoard of Iron Age gold torques ever discovered in Europe was located entirely because of Tony's persistence.

Tony worked as a Field Monument Warden for English Heritage, covering a huge area of eastern Yorkshire; he was a member of the North York Moors National Park Archaeology Group and the Yorkshire Archaeological Society's Aerial Archaeology Committee; he was elected FSA in 1979.

*I M Stead*

## GERARD FRANCIS YOUNG CBE, KStJ, HonLLD (1910–2004)

Gerard Young, a Patron of the Society since 1975, died on 6 January 2004 at the age of 93. A life-long Catholic, he was educated at Ampleforth College and devoted his long life to public service in both his Church and the wider community of his native South Yorkshire. An engineer by trade, he was apprenticed in the railway workshops in Doncaster and then joined the family firm, The Tempered Spring Company, which he built up into The Tempered Group Ltd before his retirement in 1981. His contribution to public life was enormous. He served on the Council of Sheffield University from 1943 until 1984, being pro-chancellor for 16 years, chairman for 12 years and treasurer for 4 years. He was a founding trustee of the Crucible Theatre and chairman of its building committee; the first chairman of Radio Hallam; and chairman of the Royal Hospital management committee and a governor of the United Sheffield Hospitals. In addition to his many charitable activities, including membership of the Sheffield Town Trust, he was secretary and a founding member of the ecumenical Sheffield Council of Christian Communities. He sat on the magistrates' bench from 1950 until 1985, was the last High Sheriff of Hallam in 1973–74, and Lord Lieutenant of South Yorkshire from that county's inauguration in 1974 until 1985. His public service was recognised with an honorary doctorate from Sheffield University in 1962, a CBE in 1967 and a knighthood of the Order of St John in 1976. The Society was honoured when such a distinguished public figure agreed to add patronage of the Society to his many other commitments. During his busy 'retirement' he also gave four years to realising the dream of a new church at Sandygate, Sheffield, dedicated in 1989 to St Francis. It was here that his Requiem Mass was celebrated on 16 January 2004, with the Society's president in attendance to convey the sympathies of the council and membership to his widow, Diana, and their surviving four sons.





## BOOK REVIEWS

PREHISTORIC PEOPLE OF THE PENNINES. RECONSTRUCTING THE LIFESTYLES OF MESOLITHIC HUNTER-GATHERERS ON MARSDEN MOOR. By P. A. SPIKINS. 29.5 x 21 cm. Pp. 104. Illus 95. Wakefield, West Yorkshire Archaeology Service, 2002. Price £12 plus £2 p.& p. ISBN 1 870453 29 8.

We often forget, as archaeologists, that our main responsibility is to communicate our findings to the wider public. A large well-funded excavation is worth nothing unless its results are widely disseminated. This volume has succeeded in reaching out to the large body of people interested in archaeology but not familiar with its detail, whilst at the same time contributing a great deal of academic value to the understanding of Mesolithic communities in the north of England. The achievement is all the more laudable as the project deals with a period that is perhaps one of the most difficult to bring to life.

The book presents the results of the West Yorkshire Mesolithic Project, which was carried out between 1993 and 1996 through seasonal excavations and surveys on Marsden Moor, West Yorkshire. This area has always been a haven for flint collectors and a good deal of attention is paid, in the publication, to the work of Francis Buckley and Pat Stonehouse whose detailed collection and recording laid the basis for the work. The impetus for the project was the continued erosion being suffered by the flint bearing deposits here and the need to inform the future management of this important prehistoric landscape. Alongside this, the research aims of the fieldwork are clearly stated and have been well thought out. The three main institutions involved were The National Trust, English Heritage and West Yorkshire Archaeology Service and they have collaborated to successfully fulfil conservation management, research and outreach to the local community, all within the same project.

The publication succeeds mainly because it is broad in scope. It is divided into two main parts. The first deals with the fieldwork and background to the project whilst the second sets the local results in a wider context. This involves looking at the Mesolithic across the north of England as well as discussing the use of ethnographic analogy in interpreting the evidence, using a case study of the Selk'nam of Tierra Del Fuego. The final chapter presents a vivid series of reconstruction drawings that bring to life the landscape and activities of the Mesolithic communities. Each drawing presents a view of people and landscape at a different stage in the Mesolithic period and is accompanied by a lively prose describing an imagined snapshot of life in this time. These 'semi fictional' accounts are soundly based on the empirical evidence with details added from ethnographic sources and other sites across the north. They are similar in style to Mark Edmonds' writings on the Neolithic in *Ancestral Geographies of the Neolithic*.

The fieldwork was targeted at three different scales (landscape, place and site) although at times it is hard to distinguish between the two latter categories. The excavations took place at three sites (March Hill Carr, March Hill Top and Lominot) targeted through the records of past workers as well as preliminary test pitting and auger survey. The field methods were rigorous using 3D recording of finds and sieving of excavated deposits to extract maximum information. The excavation sites were gathering places where people had come together around hearths to knap flint and probably also carry out other subsistence tasks such as hide processing, cooking and food preparation. Most of the evidence came from the later Mesolithic and was dated through radiocarbon determinations on charcoal and nutshells. One of the sites produced earlier Mesolithic material.

The aspects of life that are not directly evident from the flints and charcoal are also addressed. The use of perishable artefacts such as bone, wood and hides is not forgotten but perhaps most importantly the social and cultural aspects of the lives of these hunter-gatherers are also discussed.



The layout of the volume is easy on the eye with good use of colour and a wide range of illustrations. These are spread throughout the text and consist of site photographs, interpretative plans, aerial photographs, tables, and computer-generated terrain models of the study area. The main narrative is supplemented by a series of box sections on certain themes such as flint scatters, radiocarbon dating, pollen analysis and the work of Buckley and Stonehouse. These sections contribute a significant amount of background detail to the main body and are written in a readily accessible and readable style.

I have nothing but praise for the layout, style and content of the book. If improvements could be made it would perhaps be with the computer generated terrain models, which were not as clear as the oblique aerial photographs in helping the reader to imagine the layout of the topography. A general location map of the study area in the context of northern England would also have helped those readers who do not already know their way around the Pennines. Generally the linkage between field results, ethnographic analogy and interpretation was good, especially as it is rounded off with the reconstruction drawings. However, the theme of gender could perhaps have been discussed in a little more detail earlier on. This complex and contentious issue does not crop up until the final chapter when the traditional division of labour between men and women is presented without much discussion.

This could have been a very dry volume with endless description and detail. Instead it presents an illuminating insight not only into the lives of Mesolithic communities but also the practice of archaeological fieldwork and interpretation. Only by showing *how* we can find out about past lives and *what* the archaeological remains might tell us can we show people today *why* these remains and landscapes are actually worth preserving.

*Sheffield*

*Chris Fenton-Thomas*

**HEBDEN THE HISTORY OF A DALES TOWNSHIP.** By DAVID JOY. 23 x 16 cm. Pp. 96. Illus 53. Hebden History Group, 2002. Price: £7.50. ISBN 0 9543043 0 6.

The idea for this book began in 1994 when a group of local people held an open meeting in Hebden to see if there were others interested in joining them in producing a comprehensive history of their township in Wharfedale. Hebden History Group was born and with help from the WEA, local people learned how to research the landscape and the archives for their area. The result was an enormous amount of information, now ably concentrated into the 96 pages of this book by David Joy. Funding for the publication came from the Lottery via the Local Heritage Initiative. The money and time have both been well spent since this work is a model of both historical accuracy and accessibility for the general reader.

The book is laid out in chronological order starting with the archaeological evidence for the earliest settlement in the area. The author acknowledges that the evidence is sparse and awaiting further analysis. So often the temptation is to embellish such poor evidence but the author does not, for which he must be congratulated. The use of the old fashioned term 'early man' is perhaps the only jarring note in the chapter.

The meat of the historical and landscape research done by the group comes with the chapters on feudalism and the yeomen of Hebden. The history group has done some ground breaking work, mapping out the open field systems of the township and identifying the different phases of wall construction. The research is ably supported by excellent line drawings, maps and black and white photographs. Dry historical information is rendered informative and readable by the careful use of modern comparisons and the occasional reference to 'juicy scandal'.

A chapter on local industry provides valuable and accessible information on the lead mining remains of the area along with the now demolished cotton mill. Two chapters on nineteenth- and early twentieth-century social history follow. They are superbly illustrated with original photographs. The authors have clearly been able to call upon collections held by a wide range of people in the village.

The final chapter contains a well thought out series of walks designed to introduce people first hand to what has been written about in the preceding chapters. Limits caused by the size of the



publication means that the accompanying maps are rather small but the descriptive texts are easy to follow.

The solid credentials of the work are further accentuated by the excellent bibliography at the back. The book is perhaps not long enough to warrant an index but this reader would have found it useful. Further, more academic papers are planned by members of the Hebden History Group but for the general reader this is an excellent distillation of many years of thoughtful research.

Hebden

Karen Griffiths

CATARACTONIUM: ROMAN CATTERICK AND ITS HINTERLAND. By P. R. WILSON. 2 vols. PP. xxvi and 595 (vol. 1), xxvi and 550 (vol. II). Figs 412. Pls 106. Tables 119. CD Roms 2. CBA, Res. Reps 128 and 129, York, 2002. Price: £32 each volume. ISBN 1 902771 23 0 (vol. 1), 1 902771 24 9 (vol. II).

This report describes the results of forty years of excavation and survey in and around the site of *Cataractonium*, strategically placed on the south bank of the River Swale, where it was crossed by the major Roman road, Dere Street. The work was mainly rescue excavation in response to development of a site where the remains are largely invisible and little was previously known. However, the extensive fieldwork, excellent state of preservation, abundance of finds, and this comprehensive report, mean we now have a wealth and diversity of information, an invaluable resource for future study of Roman Britain.

Part I covers the topographic and archaeological background (prehistoric and Roman), results of geophysical survey and aerial photography, the structural reports and reports on pottery, graffiti, brick and tile. Part II contains the remaining finds reports, environmental evidence and a concluding discussion on *Cataractonium* and its regional context. With each volume is a CD containing additional catalogues and illustrations.

*Cataractonium* had Roman military origins *c.* AD 80, with no evidence of a late Iron Age predecessor. Little is known of the series of three forts (belonging respectively to the Flavian, Antonine, and a later, not-closely-dated period). However, the structural evidence and suggested interpretations are helpfully set out in a series of plans (in the concluding discussion chapter). Topography and the location of the hinterland sites are also most helpfully mapped in the introduction. The site at Bainesse, on Dere Street 2 km to the south of *Cataractonium*, began at a similar date and was of Romanised rather than native character. There was also early occupation to the north of the river.

Around the Antonine fort was a civil settlement which developed into the small town, a timber *mansio*, replaced by a well-appointed stone-built successor, indicating the presence of important official travellers. Other interesting structures included bath-houses and a possible temple *temenos*. On the northern river bank a defensive enclosure suggests a defended *vicus*. At Bainesse second-century timber buildings were replaced in stone, but this area of settlement probably went out of use in the mid-third century.

Burials, mainly inhumations with a few cremations, of a variety of dates, have been found throughout the excavated areas.

The town changed and developed; in the third century the *mansio* was demolished. By the fourth century most of the town was laid out in recognisable *Insulae* and defended by a stone wall. A probable villa was constructed to the south. Some occupation continued in the town into the fifth century, although its nature and duration is unclear.

Throughout the report there is an excellent balance between data and discussion sections. The overview of finds succeeds in its aims of helping us to see more clearly those who lived at *Cataractonium*, as well as highlighting those aspects of the assemblage which have useful implications for finds research elsewhere. Analysis of the finds has generated discussion on topics including the local or foreign origin of other inhabitants, the garrison in the Antonine/Severan period, and the possibility of fourth-century military activity. The most striking of the burials is of a young male wearing feminine jewellery of bracelets, a jet necklace and an anklet; he is suggested to be a *gallus*, or devotee of the goddess Cybele.



The synthesis of Catterick pottery looks at the dates of the excavated sites and usefully compares their character. The pottery industries associated with Catterick and its environs imply that *Cataractonium* was a major marketing centre which acted economically as a town. The pottery evidence is also taken to suggest that Catterick was connected to a flow of trade from the East Midlands. Both pottery and finds suggest that the site at Bainesse was not typical of civilian settlements, but may have had some specialist function.

This is just one of the fascinating questions covered in the concluding discussion chapter, along with the relationship between the various sites, the perceived 'blurring' of military and civilian, especially in the late period, and the end of Roman *Cataractonium*, and the potential of Catterick for ultimately developing an understanding of the late Roman/early Anglian transition in the North.

Preparing this report for publication will have been a formidable task because of the diverse nature of the material which has been produced by many individuals during the forty years of fieldwork. In the preface the author states that not only would the costs of producing a 'fully integrated' report be prohibitive, but rightly acknowledges that the result might have been a false homogeneity. This has been avoided, whilst nevertheless ordering the diverse material in such a way that the data is always admirably clear. The sheer scale of the data is also formidable, necessitating publication in two parts. While it must be said that the effort of *carrying* these volumes for any distance is not for the faint-hearted, the excellent cross-referencing means that neither the size nor the division into two will hinder readers in gaining access to any information. Both volumes contain the same contents lists, preface, summary, excellent location maps and full bibliography and index. Part I is nicely rounded off with some concluding remarks, while a full discussion is found at the end of Part II. The whole report indeed achieves its stated aim of representing 'a resource to be used, questioned and reinterpreted, hopefully many times and over many years', and all concerned are to be congratulated on its publication.

*Tyne and Wear Museums*

*Margaret Snape*

FOUNTAINS ABBEY. THE CISTERCIANS IN NORTHERN ENGLAND. By GLYN COPPACK. 24.5 x 17 cm. Pp. 160. Illus 108. Pls 14 colour. Tempus Publishing, Stroud, 2003. Price: £15.99. ISBN 0 7524 2546 3.

The Cistercians in Yorkshire have had a good press in recent years and individual abbeys have been served well by monographs or research reports. *Rievaulx Abbey* by Peter Fergusson and Stuart Harrison (Yale, 2000) was a sumptuously presented architectural and landscape study. This more modest paperback volume is still a substantial work of scholarship by a leading Cistercian exponent with a close research and administrative interest in this abbey. By concentrating on the richest house of the order in Britain and the one with the most extensive architectural remains Dr Coppack has provided a well-organised, clear and readable account of the abbey, both as a living religious community and as a landscaped feature in the post-Dissolution centuries. The chronological sequence of chapters places this monastery in its wider Cistercian context, emphasises the work of specific abbots in initiating identifiable building programmes and examines the agricultural, pastoral and mineral wealth which underpinned the monastery's prosperity. The final chapter concentrates upon the presentation of the abbey as a parkland feature in a contrived landscape and assesses the work of earlier excavators as over the past 200 years they have sought to interpret the ruins.

If this is the first monograph on Fountains which the prospective purchaser has encountered, it is good value for money, fluently written and, usually, well illustrated. If, however, the would-be purchaser already possesses or regularly consults the same author's *English Heritage Book of Fountains Abbey* (1993), then this 'new' work will be a disappointment. There is no indication on the back cover or in the publishers' flyer that this is a re-issue, though that is mentioned in the author's new Preface. The text has changed little from the original version. Opportunity has been taken to incorporate the author's comparative work on Sawley and to illustrate the geophysical evidence for the guest hall west of the west range. The 'Further Reading' has been revised.



Some illustrations have been replaced, especially the colour plates, and the overall total has been increased. The recent architectural views in colour are well-chosen. However the bench-end, formerly at Jervaulx (colour pl. 10), still does not state its present location — at Aysgarth. At least the Alan Sorrell reconstruction of the Chapel of the Nine Altars (colour pl. 14) is now printed the right way round. Despite all these improvements there are still problems. In some monochrome figures the smaller format of this version compared to the Batsford volume sometimes means that details have been cropped or lost by over-reduction. Figure 4 is a disaster and the mid eighteenth-century landscape paintings by Balthazar Nebot (Figs 97–98) have not reproduced well. The index, so often a weak aspect of Tempus publications, is generally good but then the initial labour of compilation had already been accomplished by Batsford.

The author is to be complimented for his initiative in revising his very readable text and in improving his illustrations. However the publishers' subtitle 'The Cistercians in Northern England' promises far more than is actually delivered; it should be 'the premier Cistercian house in Northern England'.

Cambridge

Lawrence Butler

SKIPTON CASTLE AND ITS BUILDERS. By RICHARD T. SPENCE. 21 x 15 cm. Pp. ix and 132. Illus 34. Skipton Castle, 2002. Price: £5.95 plus p.& p. ISBN 0 9506975 3 2. Obtainable from Skipton Castle, Skipton, N. Yorks., BD23 1AQ.

This posthumous work completes a trilogy by Dr Spence published by Skipton Castle, the previous volumes being *Skipton Castle in the Great Civil War 1642–1645* (1991) and *The Shepherd Lord of Skipton Castle: Henry Clifford, 10th Lord Clifford 1454–1523* (1994). It also concluded a lifetime's study of the Clifford lords, other products of which included biographies of George Clifford, third Earl of Cumberland (1995) and of Lady Anne Clifford (1997). He was therefore ideally suited to undertake this particular project, and the depth of archival research is apparent on every page. But the outcome is nevertheless not entirely satisfactory, in a number of respects.

Regarding the dual focus of the book — the castle *and* its builders — in general it is the owners who come first and the building second; but there is no harm in that, and in the best, earlier, sections, which include a contribution by Barbara Wright, the owners' stories are related to the political and social conditions of the time in a most illuminating way. Nor is the building itself neglected; but here Dr Spence's touch is less sure. There are some oddities — for example, ascribing a 'hammer-beam roof' to William de Forz's great hall, long before the form had been invented — and more insidiously a tendency to underestimate the contributions of the Shepherd Lord, *c.* 1500, and the future fifth Earl, in the 1620s, which is evidently the consequence of a tendency, expressed elsewhere, to overstate the subsequent contribution of Lady Anne Clifford.

A more serious criticism concerns the form and scope of the book as a whole, for it appears to have been written round the author's previous studies, sacrificing coherence and completeness to the avoidance of repetition. Most obviously, its title is misleading, for it ends at the death of the fifth Earl in 1643, stopping abruptly in the middle of events and almost in mid-sentence. The narrative is then continued in the Civil War book and the Lady Anne Clifford biography; but the period onwards from Lady Anne's death in 1676, under the Earls of Thanet and their successors, and their not insignificant contributions to the castle, have not been covered at all. Even more problematic are the gaps earlier in the story. The eras of the Shepherd Lord and of the third Earl — both crucial figures — receive only a cursory treatment, making the chapter on the period 1461 to 1603 by far the least satisfactory; but avoidance of repetition does not explain another absolute gap, from the accession of the third Lord Clifford in 1327 up to 1461. Presumably the reason for this is the assumed absence of significant developments in the castle itself during these years, but in a work which focuses on the owners that is no justification.

Further issues are presentational. The illustrations, particularly the plans, are inadequate in quality and insufficient in number for a work on this subject; and some parts of the later chapters read as if they are first drafts rather than a final version — doubtless a reflection of the sad circumstances of the book's publication — and clearly a much more rigorous editing process was



needed. In sum, this is a useful addition to the historiography of Skipton and its lords, but a definitive account of the castle still remains to be written.

*University of Central Lancashire*

*Peter Leach*

**THE YORK SEDE VACANTE REGISTER 1405–1408: A CALENDAR.** Edited by JOAN KIRBY. 25 x 17 cm. Pp. xiv and 133. Borthwick Texts and Calendars 28, University of York, 2002. Price: £11.50 plus £1 p.& p. ISBN 0-903857-89-8.

This *sede vacante* register covers the vacancy following the execution of Archbishop Richard Scrope. Diocesan business was carried on by the York chapter with ordinations performed by a suffragan bishop, who is not recorded as carrying out any other episcopal duties. Institutions and inductions, including those occasioned by exchanges of benefices, make up much of the register. The chapter granted licences for private masses more readily than Archbishop Scrope, but the editor notes that some types of business do not appear and concludes that not all the chapter's activities are recorded here. It is a pity that the index is marred by mistakes and omissions, for the calendar itself appears to be exemplary.

*Leeds*

*Catherine Collinson*

**LEVISHAM: A CASE STUDY IN LOCAL HISTORY.** By BETTY HALSE. 24.5 x 16 cm. Pp. 156. Maps 12. Illus 19. Moors Publications, Levisham, 2003. Price: £9.95. ISBN 0 9530710 1 5. Obtainable from Betty Halse, Greystones, Levisham, Pickering, YO18 7NL.

About ten years ago a local history group was started in Levisham, which lies north of Pickering on the edge of the North York Moors. The resulting book does not claim to be comprehensive either as a history of Levisham or a guide on how to write local history. It comprises fourteen loosely connected studies through which the local historians' experiences are presented for the benefit of others.

Some parts are not of universal application — many places escaped Forest Law. Slips may be found, like the definition of the Assize of Bread and Ale on page 44. There is nevertheless sound advice, such as following specific and manageable projects instead of collecting piles of unorganised information, never looking at a place in isolation from the surrounding region and being constantly aware of the fallible and incomplete nature of our sources.

The author sees local history as a serious discipline, narrow-focused but with many specialist areas and always to be approached within a wide context. Her unusual and stimulating book will be read with pleasure and profit by other local historians.

*Leeds*

*Michael Collinson*

**ROTHWELL: THE MEDIEVAL MANOR AND MANORIAL MILLS.** Edited by STUART WRATHMELL. 30 x 21 cm. Pp. iv + 32. Figs 12. Pls 22. West Yorkshire Archaeological Publications 3. Archaeological Services (WYAS), Morley 2003. Price: not stated. ISBN 1 870453 31X.

This booklet is a good example of how to relate physical remains to their context and function. The field evidence concerns a much altered late medieval manor-house, demolished in 1977, and two destroyed manorial mills. In each case the structural evidence is placed in a firm geographical and historical setting; the function and development of each site is fully examined. Rothwell lies to the south-east of Leeds in the Aire valley and was an important manorial centre, first of the Lacy family and then of the duchy of Lancaster. The report explores the medieval and later history with good map coverage. Tenurial terms are carefully explained, and the place-name evidence for land use of parks and watercourses is also explored. A conjectural reconstruction of the manorial and mill complex breathes life into the site just west of Rothwell church.

The demolition of the half-timbered house with stone and brick additions provides dramatic illustrations for both the booklet covers and the main text. The details of the timber framing are fully analysed and deductions are made about the function of the surviving rooms and about the presumed greater extent of the main manor house. The importance of this house is stressed as it is documented as one required to be built by Roger Hopton in 1487.

Rescue work conducted during destruction at two mill sites makes a modest contribution to understanding weir construction on the Aire and mill-dam details on the Haigh Brook near the manor house. In both cases the recorder contended with adverse circumstances.

Although this gives a thorough ‘warts and all’ record of difficult fieldwork undertaken about twenty years ago and an abortive excavation in 2002, this publication raises a number of questions. The first concerns the audience for whom the booklet is intended. If it is mainly the local population, then the section on manorial history and the mills is helpful in explaining terms and presuming little prior knowledge. However that on the house structure leaves many architectural terms unexplained: a glossary (or ‘Further Reading’) would have been helpful here. The second problem is that the evidence from the house is not put into a local context of comparable dated structures. Indeed the date 1487 seems to be accepted unreservedly, although no mention is made of any dendrochronological data. The Hoptons’ period of occupation is never explored — who were the Hoptons? Sometimes more could be made of the evidence. Was the castle mound (*mons*) a low ringwork like Kippax? Why suggest that the late medieval sculpture ‘may have come from the church’ when the manorial chapel was even closer. The sculpture’s subject is not identified but it appears to show St. Michael spearing a dragon. In all these aspects there is room for further discussion.

However this is generally a competent and attractive report: the editor has been well served by his main contributors (Bob Yarwood and Steve Moorhouse) and by his team of illustrators, led by Jon Prudhoe.

Cambridge

Lawrence Butler

ADWALTON MOOR 1643: THE BATTLE THAT CHANGED A WAR. By DAVID JOHNSON. 23.5 x 15.5 cm. Pp. xxiv and 145. Illus 14. Maps 20. Blackthorn Press, Pickering, 2003. Price: £14.95 pbk. ISBN 0 9540535 8 3.

This book provides a convincing account of one of the most important yet neglected battles of the Civil Wars. The author’s main contention is that the battle’s political importance was of such magnitude that it transformed the entire conflict from an English Civil War into a British one. The royal army’s crushing defeat of the northern parliamentarians under Ferdinando, Lord Fairfax, and his son Sir Thomas, forced Parliament to negotiate an alliance with the Scots covenanters to reinvigorate their flagging cause. In turn this led to the king negotiating a ceasefire with the Irish confederates that would enable royal troops in Ireland to be redeployed in England.

At the battle of Adwalton Moor the northern royalist army outnumbered its parliamentary opponent by three to one, and by eight to one in the usually decisive arm of cavalry. Given that the numerically superior side almost always won major civil war battles in England, explanations of why the royalists were so nearly defeated have always been problematic. Johnson’s detailed and coherent description of the fighting, taking fully into account the nature of the terrain now offers a full explanation. Littered with lanes, ditches, hedges, enclosures and coal pits Adwalton Moor’s terrain was unconventional for a major battle and proved very difficult for the royalist cavalry to negotiate. Johnson ventures a hypothetical reconstruction of the landscape built from references in the primary source accounts, antiquarian maps, battlefield visits, archaeological evidence and the kind of landscape interpretation pioneered earlier by P. R. Newman and Glenn Foard for Marston Moor and Naseby.

Johnson’s first chapter examines the historians and sources for the battle, subjecting them to careful scrutiny and critical analysis. Notwithstanding this and his acceptance that royalist commentators inflated the size of Fairfax’s army to mitigate their own embarrassment, Johnson appears eager to accommodate the boasts of contemporaries such as Margaret Cavendish and Sir Philip



Monckton who were considered as notoriously unreliable sources at the time. The study might have been enhanced with an appendix of the written primary sources for the battle, empowering readers to evaluate the evidence themselves. Yet this remains an impressive study and Johnson needs to be congratulated for rescuing this neglected Yorkshire battle from obscurity.

Part of the battle site has already been built over so it was disappointing to note that a portion of what remains of the battlefield has been recently threatened by development applications. As Adwalton Moor was the greatest victory obtained by the north's royalists, it is fitting that the book is dedicated to their foremost historian, Dr P. R. Newman who sadly died in January 2003. Dr Newman's scholarly insight into the civil wars along with his refreshingly candid acknowledgement of his seventeenth-century political preferences will be sorely missed.

*University of Birmingham*

*Andrew J. Hopper*

**YORKSHIRE SURNAMES AND THE HEARTH TAX RETURNS OF 1672-73.** By DAVID HEY and GEORGE REDMONDS. 21 x 15 cm. Pp. 34. University of York, Borthwick Paper no. 102, York 2002. Price: £4.00. ISBN 0-903857-33-2.

Numerous contributions, by both authors, to the study of Yorkshire surnames mean that anyone with an interest in the subject will already be familiar with their valuable work. Family historians have long been profoundly thankful for their efforts in local contexts, but the present ambitious intention is to deal with the immense list of names (nearly 80,000 in all) derived from the Hearth Tax returns of 1672-3 on a county-wide basis. There are no footnotes and the Borthwick format excludes an index and is necessarily aimed at the general reader, so it is disappointing to find that the text is so closely tied to the West Riding. To some extent this is inevitable, given the authors' background and the fact that so many of Yorkshire's highly individual surnames arose in the Pennine foothills. The economic and topographic circumstances which allowed families, and so their surnames, to proliferate within restricted areas are well known, and were rarely reproduced in the North and East Ridings; moreover, the tendency for surnames to be taken from very minor settlement sites seems to be a Pennine phenomenon.

It is true that the spread of the name Ringrose (which originated as a nickname) is well displayed here for the East Riding, while the surnames Ingledew and Rowntree are well covered for north-east Yorkshire, but it is a pity that these are such rare excursions outside the West Riding. The authors rightly point out that the Hearth Tax cannot be used as the only source, but must be backed up by all the other information available. The point is well demonstrated by reference to the Priestley family, and the number of times the first holder of a distinctive surname is identified bears witness to their research. Yet, in the North Riding, would the extremely localised instances of Cleveland surnames such as Petch or Porrit, Tiplady or Unthank, (to judge by the 1673 Hearth Tax returns) not have repaid similar examination?

Such queries aside, this work will certainly interest those who have rarely thought about the origins of their surnames, and there are real revelations. It is astonishing to discover, for example, that the many members of the Crabtree family may have originated at a single settlement of that name, or how early (from 1202, in fact) the name Wriddlesford began its divergence into Wrigglesworth, the surname, or Woodlesford, the place. That interest is offset, unfortunately, by the frequent repetition of wording within the text, where each surname considered is followed by a list (with numbers) of all the townships to which it had spread by 1672. There are in addition some small errors, as when Norwood cum Clifton appears as Norwood cum Clayton on p. 23, for this Clifton is a lost settlement site and not to be confused with Newall cum Clifton in the same list. Equally, there were no Marsdens in Guisborough in 1673 as claimed on p. 18.

*Knaresborough*

*Maurice Turner*

**UNITARIANISM, PHILANTHROPY & FEMINISM IN YORK, 1782-1821: THE CAREER OF CATHARINE CAPPE.** By HELEN PLANT. 21 x 14.5 cm. Pp. 31. Borthwick Paper No. 103,



University of York, 2003. Price: £4.00. ISBN 1-904497-02-0. Obtainable from the Borthwick Institute, St Anthony's Hall, Peasholme Green, York, YO1 7PW.

This examination of Catharine Cappe by Helen Plant is a very impressive summary of Cappe's life, work and contribution to feminism as a result of her aspiring to the principles of the Unitarian church and through her philanthropic work. Helen Plant puts forward a well-structured argument that brings together and balances the intricate relationship between the three primary influences in Catharine Cappe's life.

Helen Plant concentrates in the first half of the thesis on setting out the context of Catharine Cappe's life, including the influences on it, why she developed such independent thinking, how she was able to propagate this thinking, and how she was able to become so influential in Unitarian circles.

Helen Plant then moves on to demonstrate Catharine Cappe's work, which began with the establishment of a female benefit club for wives and daughters of colliers in Barwick in Elmet, but it was not until Cappe became friends with Faith Gray that the two were able to unite in '... leading three pioneering initiatives in female-centred, philanthropic reform, ...' (p. 17). These initiatives included setting up a spinning school, helping to reform the Grey Coat School, and educational schemes for poor girls, including a female friendly society, all in York. Cappe was also instrumental in getting women admitted to the wards of the York County Hospital, in order to 'monitor and safeguard the welfare of female patients' (p. 18). In all of these endeavours, Helen Plant notes that Cappe relied on a 'network of female friends and acquaintances' (p. 18), which emphasises the involvement of many women working towards the improvement of women's lives, not just Cappe herself.

Finally, Helen Plant demonstrates the importance of the Unitarian church and its liberal outlook, particularly in allowing women to have a voice within the movement and by placing emphasis on education, as the base to allow Cappe to develop her own beliefs and philanthropic work not only for herself, but more importantly for other women:

Active philanthropy, she argued, offered both Unitarians and women a way of demonstrating their morality and social responsibility in the face of hostility and detraction, ... (p. 16)

It is clear from Helen Plant's argument that Catharine Cappe would not have been able to carry out the work she did to help women without the influence of the teaching and beliefs of the Unitarian church, and Helen Plant does acknowledge this influence and the issues that Catharine Cappe faced in some detail. However, in my opinion, Catharine Cappe should be remembered for her philanthropic work and how this affected women in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Indeed, what Helen Plant illustrates is that Catharine Cappe's contribution to improving the status of women occurred on many levels: as a woman herself struggling against the limitations on women in that period of history; as an enabler in bringing together women from many backgrounds to work towards the betterment of poor women; as a visionary in identifying how women's lives could be improved, not only poor women's lives, but the lives of middle and upper class women by undertaking philanthropic work; as an exponent of Unitarian beliefs; and as an example of what women could achieve if given the freedom and education to do so. For the feminists that followed Catharine Cappe, they would do no better than take Cappe's belief that:

The question was not what men should permit women to do, but what women should claim the right to do themselves. (p. 24)

*Wakefield*

*Ruth Sharpe*

LIMESTONE INDUSTRIES OF THE YORKSHIRE DALES. By DAVID JOHNSON. Tempus Publishing Ltd., 2002. Pp 192. Illus. 112. Col. pls. 30. Price £16.99. ISBN 0 7524 2394 0.

The large limestone quarries which still operate in the Yorkshire Dales are considered by many to be a disfigurement of the national park landscape. *Limestone Industries of the Yorkshire Dales* shows these quarries in a different context: the survivors of a once almost ubiquitous Dales' industry.



*Limestone Industries* concentrates on the Craven area of the Dales. Here the author has recently completed a survey of all known field kiln sites. Copies of his survey proformas and photographs have been deposited with the relevant Sites and Monuments Records where the results are available to other researchers and, equally importantly, where they can be used to inform conservation and management decisions and priorities. Some 387 field kilns are shown on the first edition 6" Ordnance Survey maps in Craven in the 1850s, most of which appear to have mainly produced lime for local agricultural use. The field kilns form a relatively small part of this book but, together with agricultural and other uses of lime and eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century debates about the most efficient design of kiln, are well covered in the first four chapters.

The main part of the book concentrates on the development of the lime industry in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries when considerable efforts and ingenuity were applied to increasing the efficiency of the industry. In the late nineteenth century the Yorkshire Dales was one of the main lime producing areas in the country and at the forefront of technological innovation. The story of the development of the companies which came to dominate the local industry and the role of individual entrepreneurs such as Wilson and Clark who built the Hoffmann lime kilns at Ingleton and Langcliffe is well told.

The author's extensive historical research comes through in his discussion of these companies. Sources used range from private archive collections which identify the occupations of some minor shareholders in the Craven Lime Company, through company records and trade journals to census returns. Interestingly the numbers identified as employed in the annual quarry returns are considerably greater than those suggested by the census analyses. Those who worked in the industry are another valuable source of information and the discussion of how the Langcliffe Hoffmann kiln operated has benefited from the author's interviews with men who worked here in the 1930s. A list of recorded accidents is a grim reminder that mineral extraction and lime burning were part of a dangerous industry.

Although limeburning is now not practised in the area, quarrying continues and the consolidation of the industry and development of extractive techniques throughout the twentieth century is also discussed. Such a contemporary element is missing in many other industrial studies.

A particular strength of the book is the wealth of historic photographs identified and reproduced, most for the first time, although the author has been rather less well served by the reproduction of some more modern photographs, both as colour plates or black and white illustrations. A few of the latter are particularly indistinct in copies seen by this reviewer. Although national grid references are given for many sites, and the larger quarries benefit from a location plan, a larger or more general location plan would have been of use to readers unfamiliar with the Dales. Other site plans and kiln drawings should also have been reproduced either at a larger scale or with a larger point size while the book's value as a reference tool would have been increased by an index. However, *Limestone Industries of the Yorkshire Dales* reveals the wealth of detail which a dedicated amateur can bring to an under-researched subject and is one which it is hoped will stimulate further studies of the industrial history and archaeology of the region. The author makes what could easily have been a rather dry volume a surprisingly good read and does justice to an industry which has had a major impact on the development and character of the Yorkshire Dales landscape.

Bainbridge

Robert White

ANGLICAN RESURGENCE UNDER W. F. HOOK IN EARLY VICTORIAN LEEDS: CHURCH LIFE IN A NONCONFORMIST TOWN, 1836–1852. By HARRY W. DALTON. 21.5 x 15 cm. Pp. xiii and 158. Tables 5. Publications of the Thoresby Society, 2nd series, vol. 12 for 2001. Leeds, 2002. Price: £15 plus £1.50 p.& p. ISBN 0 900 741 60 0.

Walter Farquhar Hook, vicar of Leeds 1837–59 and dean of Chichester 1859–75, was one of the most important ecclesiastical figures of his generation yet he has been largely neglected by historians. Part of the reason for this is the excellent, though partial, biography by his son-in-law, W. R. W. Stephens; another is the fact that Hook left comparatively few personal papers and the majority are still in private custody and therefore somewhat inaccessible. Although Dalton sets



out with a revisionist agenda he ends up painting a not very different picture of Hook, or his impact on Leeds, than that of previous scholars, though he introduces a good deal of new evidence, especially in relation to the church extension programme in Leeds between the 1820s and 1850s. This includes extensive use of contemporary newspapers, the *Leeds Intelligencer* and *Leeds Mercury*.

As a piece of local history, Dalton's study works well. He gives a very clear picture of ecclesiastical developments in Leeds over a period of fifteen years, though it seems strange that he stops in 1851 and thus ignores the last eight years of Hook's incumbency at Leeds, thereby preventing him from giving a more considered assessment of Hook's impact on the city. Indeed he makes no attempt to do this and his conclusion (p. 142) is only sixteen lines long!

As a contribution to the religious historiography of Victorian Britain, Dalton's work falls short in many respects. He does not really understand the complex nature of Anglican churchmanship after 1830, and the very subtle nuances between different groups of high churchmen. He alleges (p. 112) that Hook's declared opposition to Tractarianism, which he fails to analyse properly, pulls him towards a closer understanding of Evangelical attitudes, but the evidence for this is unconvincing, and the suggestion that Evangelicals were also seeking a rapprochement with high churchmen seems quite bizarre. The 1850s and 1860s were a period in which Evangelicals took every opportunity to attack high church doctrines and liturgical innovations, and they took far less care in distinguishing between the different schools of high churchmanship than high churchmen themselves did. Hook's championship of the Anglican *via media* was one which acknowledged the truth and compatibility of both certain Catholic and certain Protestant beliefs and practices, but he certainly did not accept the Evangelical position on the doctrines of salvation, baptismal regeneration, episcopacy or the sufficiency of scripture. However much Hook may have disagreed with some Tractarian attitudes, and to what extent he did so is a matter of debate, he was consistently at one with the Tractarians rather than the Evangelicals on such matters.

*University of Wales, Lampeter*

*Nigel Yates*

THE LIFE AND WORKS OF JOHN CARR OF YORK. By BRIAN WRAGG, edited by GILES WORSLEY. 28.5 x 21 cm. Pp. viii + 252. Illus. 256. Oblong, Otley, 2000. Price £45 (hb), £25 (pb). ISBN 0 9536574 2 6 (hb), 0 9536574 1 8 (pb). Available from Oblong Creative Ltd., The Annexe, Wharfebank Business Centre, Ilkley Road, Otley LS21 3JP.

When the aged John Carr called on a fellow Yorkshireman Beilby Porteus, bishop of London, in 1794, the bishop noted in his diary 'Had a visit this day from Mr Carr of York, the Architect of the North, with whose conversation I was highly pleased'. This comment encapsulates the professional and social importance of Carr. He was known from the city in which he lived, twice becoming its Lord Mayor; he was distinguished by his essentially northern architectural practice; and he was an excellent companion able to mix as freely with bishops and dukes as he was with carpenters and plasterers.

However, this leading Georgian architect has hitherto been poorly served by biographers. The first attempt, by Robert Davies in the 1877 volume of this journal, was modest and written up for the author posthumously. The second by William Eden was similarly incomplete and posthumous. This third biography by Brian Wragg is far more complete, though sadly also posthumous — published five years after the author's death but painstakingly edited by Giles Worsley. The latter has provided a meticulous array of references to unpublished documents and to research published since 1995. He has also included an excellent range of illustrations, using Carr's own surviving plans and elevations, photographs both recent and historic, and some of Wragg's own plans of houses. This gives a valuable impression of the scale and range of Carr's work and of the influential position he occupied in Georgian architecture alongside his contemporaries of Adam, Chambers and Paine.

The volume divides easily into two parts. The first hundred pages are biographical, tracing Carr's career from his origins in Horbury near Wakefield, his early work for Lord Burlington at Kirkby Hall and his move to York soon after 1750. His racecourse grandstand on the Knavesmire at York brought him into the aristocratic circle of the Rockingham Whigs, most of whom became



his main clientele in Yorkshire and far beyond. In his mature years he designed and supervised the erection of every type of building from the grandest mansions to the ornamental obelisk and the park gatehouse, from impressive town halls to spartan hospitals. He spent many months in travelling as he had commissions throughout the north as far as Edinburgh, south to the Home Counties and Portugal and westwards into Lancashire and Ulster. Even in old age the pace scarcely slackened. He was still designing additions to county houses and road bridges when he was past 80 years old and retired to his manor house outside York. An integral part of Wragg's biographical survey is a valuable chapter on the mechanics of this architectural practice, showing how closely Carr supervised every detail of his buildings. Another aspect which comes over very clearly is what an agreeable companion Carr was to his clients and to his family, especially his nieces (best shown in Myerscough's recent edition\*).

The second part of this book (140 pages) is a catalogue raisonné of Carr's works arranged alphabetically by location. This list is fully supported by documentary references and by illustrations. It supplants the earlier lists by Davies, Eden and the York Georgian Society. While the editor stresses that his catalogue cannot claim to be definitive, it is certainly more reliable and more comprehensive than any preceding list. It will stand as an essential point of reference to future scholars.

Those who wish to pursue Carr's work either by a particular type of patronage, such as by West Riding industrialists, or by a specific type of building, such as churches, must search for themselves (or consult Colvin's biographical dictionary). Similarly those who require an assessment of Carr's handling of architectural forms and styles will be disappointed in this volume, though some aspects such as Carr's use of Gothic Revival style have been discussed in previous articles by Wragg.

What has been published here is a thorough and sympathetic biography, an excellent examination of Carr's working practices and as complete a catalogue of all his buildings as is possible until his lost portfolios of drawings have been rediscovered. The editor has been fully justified in ensuring that Wragg's monograph has reached a wider public. John Carr, the architect of the North, can worthily stand as a giant of Georgian architecture.

\* UNCLE JOHN CARR. THE DIARIES OF HIS GREAT-NIECES HARRIET AND AMELIA CLARK. Edited by CORITA MYERSCOUGH. 24.5 x 16 cm. Pp. x and 74. Pls. 18. York Georgian Society, York, 2000. Price £7.99. ISBN 0 950 3663 58.

*Cambridge*

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